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Bulletin

A publication of the VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Conserving wild flowers and wild places

Conservation Alert: Issues to watch

Virginia General Assembly

The Virginia General Assembly convenes at noon on January 10. The Virginia Conservation Network has declared Monday, January 15, as Legislative Day.

VCN has prepared reports, called white papers, on priority issues:

Water Quality: Protecting Virginia's Nontidal Wetlands; Total Maximum Daily Loads; Horseshoe Crabs

Land Conservation: State Funding for Land Conservation; Virginia Agricultural Vitality Program

Land Use: Smart Growth; Visual Quality Legislation; VDOT Reform and Transportation Funding

Air Quality: Cleaning the Air: Setting Fair Standards for New Power Plants.

The nine white papers contain the Statement of the Issue; Background information; Recommendations; Contact for more information. If you have internet access, go to www.vcnva.org to print out the entire white paper for each of the issues. If you would like a copy of any of the white papers, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to the VNPS office or e-mail: vcn@richmond.infi.net, specifying which papers you want to receive.

If you can visit your legislators, please do. If you do not know who represents you, go to www.legis.state.va.us and click on legislature. Enter your zip code and get your legislator's name and contact information. You may also request copies of the list of legislators when you request white papers. A copy can be sent with the white papers.

If you have internet, you can sign up for e-mail action alerts at www.vcnva.org.

CARA Legislation Fails

Though the CARA (Conservation And Reinvestment Act) bill received unprecedented grassroots support around the country and was supported by congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle, all 50 state governors, the President of the United States, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce and was passed by the House, it was stopped at the last moment! The House passed CARA by an overwhelming 345-102 votes, but the CARA bill never reached the Senate floor. (Both Senators Charles Robb and John Warner supported the bill.) Now Virginia will not receive $27 million annually to spend according to state and locally determined priorities.

(See Issues, page 10)

Plan to Plan: You can take part in creating the future of VNPS

On Saturday February 24, members of the VNPS Board of Directors, chapter members and other interested members of VNPS will meet at Pocahontas State Park in Chester, Virginia. There will be one full day of sharing ideas, dreams and hopes for work to be done by VNPS in coming years.

We are pleased that J. Christopher Ludwig will kick off our day with the latest information about the Flora of Virginia Project. Currently Chief Biologist for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage Program, Chris will also share information about DCR-NHP current activities and some future projects.

A facilitator will lead the group through the planning process beginning at 10 a.m. At mid-day, lunch will be furnished by the Society to all participants. A separate mailing will come to you in January with details. We plan to hold registration from 9-9:30 a.m. hoping that travelers from across the state will have time to arrive by then. Saturday evening, two agenda items are planned. A team will put the day's work into order and there will be a

(See Planning, page 10)

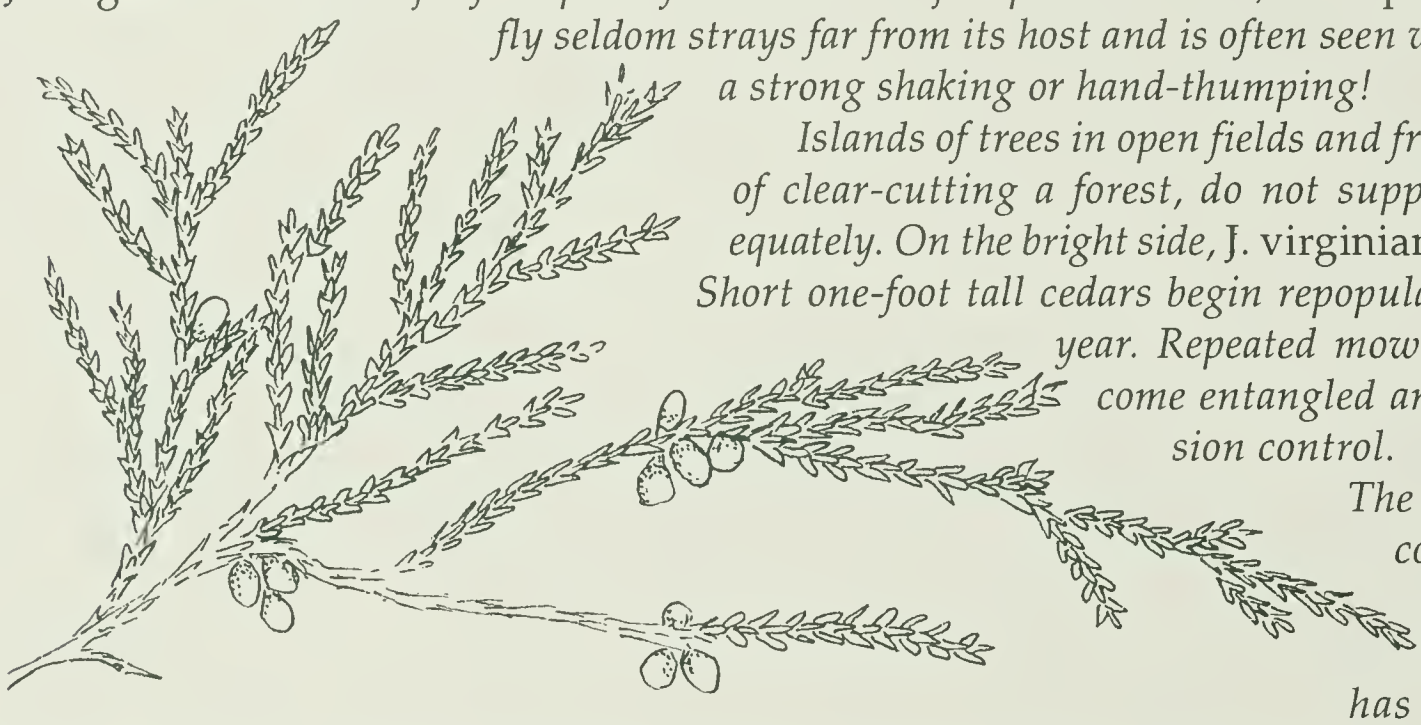
From your President

Humble native is actually extraordinary

Pondering is pleasant when driving along I-66 west. An overcast winter day reveals little color, only that of olive green Juniperus virginiana, *our eastern red cedar. Driving by these roadside sentinels, the olive green conical trees seem glazed by a blue haze - its prolific blue-gray berries. A lone steer can be seen luxuriously scratching its throat on the bristly scales of the cedar's branch.*

The thought gels that our eastern red cedar is a forgiving native tree. Despite persecution by the apple orchard industry due to a fungus (Gymnosporangium Juniperus-virginae), *shared by* J. virginiana *and the apple tree family, and despite being the victim of Faber Company's early pencil industry by overharvesting, this tree thrives and gives!*

More than sentinels along our roads, cedars form hedgerows offering shelter, food and wildlife corridors. Cedar waxwings, robins and mockingbirds make short work of consuming all of a cedar's ripe berries. The J. virginiana *is the major food plant for the olive or juniper hairstreak,* Callophrys gryneus. *This butterfly seldom strays far from its host and is often seen when* J. virginiana *is given a strong shaking or hand-thumping!*



Islands of trees in open fields and fragmented woods, the result of clear-cutting a forest, do not support Virginia's wildlife adequately. On the bright side, J. virginiana *returns like gangbusters! Short one-foot tall cedars begin repopulating vacant land within a year. Repeated mowing helps root systems become entangled and they function as an erosion control.*

The red cedar is wasted where construction takes place. It is wasted if it grows within a mile of an orchard. The tree has economic value, having been used for fences and house siding; fragrant insect-repelling chests and closets. The red heartwood yields oil for insecticides, liniments, perfumes and furniture oil. Medicinally, it is a diuretic and is used as an anthelmintic (deworming).

The cedar forms dense colonies and is compatible with many native plants thereby yielding biodiversity and thus forming a community of plants that supports diverse species. Sumacs and blackberries share space with cedars. It is sad that no cry goes up over wasting this resource. Not a second thought is given when this native is "controlled" by eradication.

Invasive plants form dense monolithic colonies that are incompatible with native plants and do not always support wildlife. Protests can be heard when it is suggested they be controlled in natural habitats or that over-planting of the invasive species be curtailed.

Restoration and wildlife planting professionals often search in vain for J. virginiana *at nurseries. They will pay good money for eastern red cedar! Some destroy, others restore.* Juniperus virginiana *is a landscape tree in England! Think about it the next time you see the brushpile in the clear field or forest!*

Let's hear a "Hurrah!" for the ordinary, extraordinary native Juniperus virginiana *and the biodiversity it supports.*

Nicky Staunton, VNPS President

Jefferson Chapter sponsors Bear Garden as 15th VNPS Registry Site

Jefferson Chapter is the sponsor of the 15th Virginia Native Plant Society Registry Site. Chapter members John and Jean Buschmann are the owners of Bear Garden located in the James River watershed near New Canton. The property has a variety of habitats: alluvial fields, bluffs with rock outcroppings along the James River and Bear Garden Creek, floodplains, oak-hickory-pine woodlands, riparian wetlands, old fields in various stages of succession and a large pond.

Several notable species are found: *Galax urceolata* is at its northernmost range; *Gentiana clausa*, at its eastern limit; and *Trautvetteria caroliniensis* which is also at its eastern limit and very rare in the Piedmont. Another species present here, *Acalypha deamii*, Deam's three-seeded mercury, was not known in Virginia when the last *Atlas of the Virginia Flora* was published.

Thirteen species of orchids have been found on the property, including large displays of yellow lady-slippers in several locations. A colony of large whorled pogonia is also present.

The Buschmanns acquired Bear Garden in 1954 and moved there in 1963. The land was farmed until 1981 and has since been allowed to return to its natural state with some fields being mowed to provide open habitat.

With over 600 acres to explore, the chapter has many opportunities for plant study and Jean Buschmann has many species for her water color subjects.

VNPS warmly thanks the Buschmann family and Jefferson Chapter for recognizing this unique natural resource.

What is the VNPS Registry Program?

Gentiana clausa
Illustration by Nicky Staunton

The VNPS Registry is a voluntary program designed by the Virginia Native Plant Society to protect the plant treasures residing in natural communities throughout Virginia. Landowners who agree to register their properties as Virginia Native Plant Sites take an important step toward preserving the natural features of the land.

The primary requirement is that the site have regional or state significance because of its native plants. Significant sites may exhibit an exemplary occurrence of a habitat, a plant community, or a plant species. Sites may include an unusual, persisting variation of a plant species, or an assemblage of species. Or the site may exhibit some quality with the unique potential to inspire community awareness.

Get inspired from revolutionary landscaping book, then pass it on

***The Landscaping Revolution, Garden* With *Mother Nature, Not Against Her* by Andy Wasowski, with Sally Wasowski, published by Contemporary Books, Chicago, Illinois, 2000, 166 pp.**

Not only do I collect plants, but I also collect books. Books on plants, that is. But Andy Wasowski's latest book, *The Landscape Revolution, Garden* With *Mother Nature, Not Against Her,* will not make it to the book shelf. Instead, this gem will be passed along to a friend with the provision that it be passed on again to someone else, to enlighten the mowing masses out there.

Beginning with a sometimes light-hearted look at what we do to our outdoor spaces, Andy, with his wife Sally Wasowski, explores the origins of "modern" landscape ideals. He then goes on to explain in an easy, conversational manner why this way of thinking will not work in the not-so-distant future, and that there is a better way — native plants! Twenty-six pages of natives, of course, do not do justice to the range and beauty that is our native plant palette, but it does give the unindoctrinated a good sampling of what's out there. Then, if you need more reasons to convert, the Wasowskis take a look at invasive exotics, pesticide dangers, homogenization of the landscape, and disappearing wildlife, all presented in a way to get the reader thinking, but not turned off.

The book is peppered with sidebars profiling people who have embraced the natives movement and shared it with others. Photographs throughout illustrate the often absurd nature of the modern landscape and the elegant success of natives. The Wasowskis' style will make you chuckle, make you think and, best of all, make you realize that you and your little suburban yard can make a difference.

The last part of this wonderful book looks at how to go about converting not only your landscape, but also your neighbor's. And the only thing I would add is that when you are finished with this book, pass it along.

Deanne Eversmeyer,VNPS Horticulture Chair

Abstract of minutes

South Hampton Roads hosts December board meeting

South Hampton Roads Chapter welcomed VNPS directors in early December to the Norfolk Botanical Gardens. It was a wonderful time of year to enjoy the varieties of camellias in bloom on a winter's day filled with snow flurries.

VNPS directories of the board and chapters were distributed.

The board voted to accept the invitation of Hylah Boyd, President of Scenic Virginia (SV), to join with SV and other conservation groups to build a coalition with a goal to discontinue the indiscriminate spraying of herbicides along Virginia's highways by VDOT and utility companies. Boyd reported on touring Virginia's roads with a VDOT official and addressing excessive and unnecessary tree trimming and herbicide use by VDOT and utility companies along state roads. She reports feeling progress in resolving the tree cutting issue, but much work to be done regarding proper application of herbicides.

The Virginia Wilderness Committee presented a certificate to commend and thank VNPS members for their endeavors and support in the passage of the Virginia Wilderness Act of 2000. HR4646 and S2865 passed and placed The Priest and Three Ridges under the National Wilderness Preservation System. The certificate is signed by Jim Murray, president, and Bess Murray, officer of the VWC, and also, members of VNPS.

The Flora of Virginia Project is progressing with Chris Ludwig working with Alan Weakley on the preliminary format. Chris is working on the prospectus and promotional brochure for the project. The 501(c)3 status is achieved and donations to the project may be made payable to VAS, Attn. Dr. Rex Baird, Treasurer, P. O. Box 279, Wise, VA 24293 with an appropriate notation that the Flora of Virginia Project is to receive the funds.

It was reported that 1,836 Stakeholders Questionnaires were mailed and over 500 have been returned. The information is being entered into a database to use at the February retreat.

Discussion concerning the VNPS Annual Workshop led the board to consider having the workshop in the fall of 2001 or allowing the Planning Retreat to replace the Annual Workshop 2001 and wait until 2002 to return to the March Workshop in Richmond. The inclination was to not plan a workshop for 2001. Members are urged to participate in the Planning Retreat.

Stan Shetler, Botany Chair, reviewed the Virginia Wildflower of the Year program. Trailing arbutus, the WOY 2001, is a selection not oriented toward horticulture due to its nature of being difficult to propagate and transplant. It is the first-ever of VNPS's 13 WOY selections that will emphasize the important VNPS message of protecting and preserving its habitat where it exists. The brochure will be distributed with the spring *Bulletin* using a photograph for the cover. The policy of selecting the WOY a year in advance was affirmed and accordingly, witch hazel, *Hamamelis virginiana*, was selected as the WOY 2002. Happily, this will meld with the national collection of *Hamamelis* sp. arriving at their new home in Green Spring Garden Park in Alexandria.

Conservation Chair, Jessica Strother, reported on a visit to Fort A.P. Hill during the Society of American Foresters meeting.

The Invasive Alien Plant Working Group has met with Ted Scott, Ruth Douglas and Mary Pockman. Ruth will be representing VNPS in cooperative efforts with Virginia agencies in Richmond, continuing work begun by Ted. She will attend and represent VNPS at meetings of the Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council. Mary Pockman will represent VNPS at meetings of Plant Conservation Alliance and the Mid-Atlantic Pest Plant Council. Mary will also work with VNPS chapters on various conservation issues. Ted will continue to support the program.

Faith Campbell is on the National Invasive Species Council formed following President Clinton's executive order 13112, February 1999. It was urged that state advisory boards be formed. She submitted the first draft of the National Management Plan on Invasive Species to Ted Scott for comments and the comments were returned. (The document is located at www.invasivespecies.gov)

Deanne Eversmeyer, Horticulture Chair, plans to take the VNPS professional display to the January Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show in Baltimore, January 9-11, 2001, perhaps sharing space with the Maryland Native Plant Society. (The display will also be at the Virginia Beach Flower and Garden Show in January and the Maymont event in Richmond in February 2001.)

Membership Chair, Mary Painter noted that forming a chapter in Fredericksburg is top priority. As a point of information, there are just over 2,000 VNPS members statewide. Mary is also chair of the Nominating Committee and Butch Kelly turned over to her information on positions to be filled in 2001.

Charles Smith, Fund Raising Chair, reported a wonderfully supportive response to our fund-raising letter. He expressed great appreciation for the society receiving over $7,000. It has gone a long way toward supporting the costs of our society work and the long-range planning meeting in February 2001.

Pam Weiringo, Publications Chair, reported the renewal of our contract and an increase in fee per page in recognition of Nancy Sorrells' work as editor of the *Bulletin*. Pam requested response from directors who wanted extra *Bulletin* copies to distribute.

Publicity Chair Bruce Jones requested that each director furnish him with publishing contacts for his future press releases. The information is requested before the end of 2000.

Our registry program was updated by Bo Dale who reported listing the 16th VNPS registry site in Norge, Virginia in the York River Watershed. Green Haven, noted for its spring ephemerals, also supports

(See State activity, page 9)

Native shrubs provide interest in winter landscape

Blandy Connections

In the winter landscape the skeletons of diverse deciduous trees dominate the structure of the scene. The workhorses, however, may well be the shrubs that form the hedges and edges in the landscape. Hedges, clipped or not, and edges are critical niches for a wealth of landscape visitors and inhabitants. Just as each critter has its habitat requirements, so do the shrubs you'll want to include.

When choosing the right shrubs, consider basic growing conditions, soil, light, and water requirements. Don't forget your own landscape design needs and personal preferences. Can the selection perform double duty, such as attracting wildlife as well as filling a design need? With these ideas in mind, let's look at some of my favorites for winter interest in the home landscape.

The dramatic appeal of red enlivens winter's muted shades of gray and brown. Red osier dogwood with slender red stems (*Cornus stolonifera, syn.: C. sericea*) massed as an informal clump or an informal hedge draws the eye to quiet areas in the landscape. To keep a steady supply of the red twigs each year, prune the shrub in winter to a few inches tall. [Note: there is a cultivar of *C. stolonifera*, 'Flaviramea' that has striking yellow-green stems.]

Red berries have enormous appeal in the landscape not only for color interest, but also as a significant food source for birds and small mammals. For a profusion of lasting red fruit, winterberry, *Ilex verticillata*, is a winner. If you have an area that is sometimes damp, you will quickly become a devotee of spicebush, *Lindera benzoin*. Birds favor the one-half-inch oval red fruits from this shrub. Be sure to note that both the winterberry (as well as all hollies) and spicebush are monoecious, meaning they have male and female flowers on separate plants. Fruits are borne on female plants. A male plant as a pollen source will need to be planted nearby, if not in the same landscape.

More subtle than red berries are the delicate strap-like flowers of the witchhazel, *Hamamelis vernalis*. When most other plants are still hunkered down in their root systems, the witchhazel decorates its slightly twisted stems with yellow, orange and red, as if to show it is not afraid of the chills of winter.

Staples of any dormant landscape are the evergreen shrubs. Among the conifers are very few choices that remain shrub sized. Common juniper, *Juniperus communis*, and dwarf cultivars of eastern red cedar, *J. virginiana*, are two to consider. However, among the broad-leaved evergreens are some handsome choices. Hollies and rhododendrons top the list. Both need attention to soil conditions. They tolerate our basic soils at Blandy, but generally they do prefer acidic soils. Yaupon holly, *Ilex vomitori*, tends toward a taller and looser habit while inkberry, *I. glabra*, has somewhat larger leaves and a denser growth habit. American holly, *I. opaca*, indeed is evergreen and has attractive red berries; however, it tends to outgrow the shrub classification after a few years.

Did you ever consider flowering raspberry, *Rubus odorata*, or our native bush-honeysuckle, *Diervilla lonicera*, for winter interest? The tan-beige stems offer a warm contrast to the shades of gray-brown of the average deciduous shrub. Bark that peels in long narrow strips is an additional feature of the flowering raspberry.

It is cozy in the house where you sip your sumac tea and wonder about winter in your garden. Should you include a sumac, *Rhus typhina*? The panicles of red fruit seen along the roadsides are indeed attractive. Alas, encourage it in the open places and edges of larger landscapes; it is not well suited to a small home landscape.

You can find all the plants described here, except the common juniper, on the Native Plant Trail at the State Arboretum of Virginia at Blandy. We are open year around from dawn until dusk, free of charge. Come visit and enjoy our winter landscape.

Mary Olien, Assistant Curator for Education
Blandy Experimental Farm

Progress continues on Flora of Virginia project

VNPS member response to the Flora of Virginia Project questionnaire that appeared in the last issue of the VNPS *Bulletin* has been excellent. A database has been established for contacting VNPS members who are interested in helping with various aspects of this project. If you responded to this survey you will be contacted in the future as the Flora Project develops. The results of this questionnaire will be analyzed and published in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

Progress on the Flora Project continues. Chris Ludwig, chief biologist for the Virginia Natural Heritage Program, is working on a preliminary format for the Flora of Virginia, as well as a prospectus and a promotional brochure for the Flora Project.

(See Flora, page 9)

Virginia's winter streams have no time for dormancy

Many of us think in terms of plants and their annual cycles. Winter is a time of dormancy when the plant shuts down metabolic processes in order to survive the low energy (i.e., sunlight) availability and low temperatures of the season. But while our plants are dormant, many of our streams are reaching the peak activity level of their annual cycle.

In the eastern United States, our non-tidal streams derive almost all of their energy from plant material that falls and washes into them. Most of our tidal streams also rely heavily on this external (allochthonous) energy source. It is the very act of trees going dormant and dropping those millions of tons of leaves that triggers the onset of high activity in the streams.

This phenomenon was recently brought home to me while looking at Big Rocky Run, a medium-sized creek in western Fairfax County. Big Rocky suffers from having a lot of development in its watershed, so it gets excessive flow during storms that flushes leaves and debris out and scours banks. But this fall there has been very little rain, and Big Rocky Run's leaf pack has remained in place. Within a two-week period in early November, Big Rocky Run's water went from clear to dark brown. This beautiful brown-to-black color is familiar to our friends who live along slow-moving coastal plain streams like the Mattaponi River where tanic acid from leaves and other woody debris is not flushed out regularly.

That color is not the result merely of tanins leaching from the leaves. It tells us that the shredders are at work. Aided by fungi that colonize the leaves and help break them down, the shredders are a group of mostly insect larva that specialize in eating leaves and other organic debris. While the leaves form the basis of the stream food web, the fungus and shredders are the organisms that make that energy available by breaking it down. Shredders include many varieties of mayflies, stoneflies, caddisflies, and true flies. They can be called primary consumers.

Secondary consumers rely on what the shredders break down as well as fleshy plant parts and rotting animal pieces. In this group you may find crayfish, amphipods (shrimp-like creatures), isopods, worms (including leaches), true flies, beetles, caddisflies, fresh water mussels, clams and fish. A cadre of scraping organisms includes snails, limpets, flatworms and fish. Finally come the predators like stoneflies, beetles, dragon and damselflies, hellgramites and fish. Salamanders, frogs, snakes and turtles can all play an important role in streams as predators but are generally dormant in winter.

What you find in your stream depends on stream size and bed composition, stream temperature and pH, food availability and water quality. The size of a stream as well as whether it has a gravelly or soft bottom can greatly influence what lives there. Most organisms cannot tolerate a pH much below 6 (acid) or much above 8 (basic). Stream temperature has an impact on the metabolic rate of animals and helps determine the amount of oxygen that is present. Cold water holds more oxygen. Oxygen can be a big problem for stream organisms. For comparison, the maximum amount of oxygen usually found in a cold, clean stream is about 12 parts per million. As air breathers, we have about 210,000 parts per million oxygen available for us to breathe! If the oxygen in a stream falls below four parts per million animals die.

Generally, if a stream does not have a lot of urbanized area or a significant pollution source in its watershed, it will support a wide variety and abundance of animals regardless of its size or whether it has a soft or gravelly bottom. Parking lots, roads, and lawns cause excessive water flow during storms and low flow afterward and add nutrients and pollutants. Non-point source pollution from livestock or heavily fertilized fields or point source pollution such as that from mine drainage or other industrial uses can greatly degrade water quality.

Volunteer and professional stream monitors look at the animals living in a stream as the major determinant of the quality of its water. The variety and abundance of animals are direct reflections of how clean the water is. The cleanliness of the water, in turn, is mostly a function of whether the stream gets too little or too much water and whether it has a significant pollution source. These factors are largely dependent on human activity. So water quality is mostly determined by what humans do on the land around the stream.

The timing of the leaf fall and the cooling of the waters set up the perfect conditions for the high activity levels in our streams during late fall and winter. As you ponder the winter landscape and plan next year's garden projects, remember that our streams are far from dormant. The person who wanders down to the creek and flips over a rock or grabs a handful of hole-filled leaves will be rewarded with a glimpse of a community at the peak of its annual cycle.

Charles Smith, VNPS Fundraising Chair

From Near and Far

AT land trust effort is launched

In November, the Land Trust program of the Appalachian Trail Conference began its attempt to purchase the 710-acre Freezeland Orchard next to the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area.

Following failure of the proposal for rezoning the property by the Roscoe Group, the land is again on the market and unless it can be purchased to be protected, it will be again offered for subdivision into up to 100 housing lots.

The acreage that the ATC Land Trust group initially hopes to purchase is mostly on the Fauquier side of Blue Mountain, located in Linden, Virginia. A portion of the land is in forests and adjoins the wildlife management area renowned for its trillions of *Trillium grandiflorum*. An assessment of the flora on this property would indicate that it also has trillium and may also have some of the rare plants located on the immediate adjacent WMA land. ATC hopes that the state of Virginia will assist in purchase of at least 200 acres. Purchase of the entire land would protect 55 natural springs, including headwater springs for two major watersheds feeding Goose Creek and the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers. For ATC hikers, the land offers an excellent viewshed.

The ATC Land Trust has applied to the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation for funds and is pushing hard to locate donors and conservation buyers to join the partnership with them and the Piedmont Environmental Council before spring. Additional information can be obtained by calling Eric Nasar at 540-955-1700 (ATC) or Nicky Staunton at 703-368-9803.

Birding Trail update

The Birding and Wildlife Trail, sponsored by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, (VDGIF) is "intended to unify a series of existing and potential sites into one cohesive marketing and enhancement platform." The Birding and Wildlife Trail will be a driving trail using existing roadways to link a series of wildlife watching sites across the Commonwealth. The trail is intended to benefit wildlife enthusiasts by providing a quality recreational experience, and to benefit local communities by providing a marketing channel for ecotourists. It will be developed in three phases: I Coastal Plain, II Western Mountains, III Central Connections.

In December, progress was made on phase I which is the Coastal Birding and Wildlife Trail. In January, VDGIF hopes to hire a consultant to begin evaluating sites for the Coastal Trail. Work has also started on signs and map designs.

The Mountain phase of the Birding Trail is picking up momentum! As of December 18, nominations have been received for 21 sites, as well as several letters and resolutions of support. The Mountain phase includes areas from I-29 west to the state line. Time is running short to submit your site nominations - they are due by January 12. This is your chance to participate in this phase of the Birding Trail. Do you know of some beautiful publicly-accessible areas that offer wildlife viewing or even great scenery viewing? VDGIF is still accepting city/county resolutions and letters of support for the Birding and Wildlife Trail and would like to have as many of these as possible by mid-January for inclusion in the application for TEA-21 funding.

Please feel free to share this information with others who may be interested, particularly local birding clubs, convention and visitors bureaus, tourism organizations, and other groups and individuals interested in ecotourism and promotion of Virginia's diverse natural resources.

For a sample letter of support, sample resolution of support, information about addressing and sending your letter or resolution of support, a site nomination form, or additional information about the Birding and Wildlife Trail, please contact VDGIF at 804-367-4335; e-mail BirdingTrail@dgif.state.va.us; www.dgif.state.va.us (link to "wildlife"); or mail: Birding and Wildlife Trail, 4010 W. Broad St., Richmond VA 23230

English ivy factsheet

Invasive English ivy, *Hedera helix*, now is the subject of a fact sheet prepared by the national Plant Conservation Alliance's Alien Plant Working Group which focuses on invasive plants. Many requests for a fact sheet on English ivy have been received, so this fact sheet is most welcomed. Anyone seeing the rampant invasive growth of English ivy along natural forest floors and covering tree trunks and branches feels alarm for the health of the ecosystem and the trees hosting the vines. To obtain a copy from the web: http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/hehe1.

NWF internship

The National Wildlife Federation is hiring for the Schoolyard Habitats Program Internship position. The program supports schools and communities in the creation and restoration of wildlife habitat on the schoolgrounds, and in the use of these sites as outdoor classrooms. Position begins February 5. This is a 48-week position for $275/week, with benefits. To apply, send resume, cover letter, and three references to: Julie Totaro, Schoolyard Habitats Program Coordinator, National Wildlife Federation, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, VA 22184.

Chapter News

Bur oak to be planted

The Shenandoah Chapter has decided to plant a bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) at the Blue Ridge Community College Arboretum in memory of Mary Kagey, the wife of charter member Jacob Kagey. The native plants arboretum in Weyers Cave was started in 1985 under the guidance of BRCC professor Anne Nielsen.

Potowmack annual meeting

The Potowmack Chapter held its annual meeting at Hidden Oaks Nature Center October 15. The day's featured speaker was Dr. James Comiskey who works at the Smithsonian. His slide program detailed his work in tropical forests from Bolivia to Puerto Rico to St. John. His research focuses on how forest habitats adapt to natural disturbances, particularly hurricanes. The findings from this investigation will help guide the replanting of forests disturbed by man.

PWWS meeting held

Frances and Phil Louer hosted the Prince William Wildflower Society's annual meeting this fall at their five-acre garden in Haymarket on September 17. Members were guided through the garden with a computer-generated map created by the Louers. Asters, spicebushes with red berries, and Jack-in-the-pulpit were all sighted during the visit.

Elected at the meeting were Nancy Vehrs, president; Leo Stoltz, vice-president; June Najjum, secretary; and Marie Davis, treasurer. Outgoing president Gina Yurkonis was presented with a pewter plate for her service.

Successful plant rescue in Fairfax

The Potowmack Chapter successfully carried out a plant rescue this fall on 44 acres of mature deciduous woodland across from the Fairfax County Government Center. Approximately 30 members were involved in the rescue which was organized by Barbara Farron.

A pleasant surprise during the project was the small number of invasive alien plants and the large number of healthy native plants on the property. Among the rescued and relocated plants were: perfoliate bellwort (*Uvulaira perfoliata*), bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), nine fern species, Indian cucumber-root (*Medeola virginiana*), Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*), Lycopodium spp., cranefly (*Tipularia iscolor*), lily-leaved twayblade (*Liparis lilifolia*), pink lady-slipper (*cypripedium acaule*), rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*), showy orchis (*Galearis spectabilis*), partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*), round-leaved pyrola (*Pyrola rotundfolia*), Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*), spotted wintergreen (*Chimaphila maculata*), and various trees and shrubs.

The plants were relocated to sites that included schoolyard habitat gardens, nature center gardens, Green Spring, Meadowlark Gardens, the Virginia State Arboretum, and Audubon Naturalist Centers.

Mulch Month held

Members of the Prince William Wildflower Society participated in Mulch Month at the Ben Lomond Old Rose Garden in Manassas. November is the month that local volunteers work to spread mulch on the beds of the public garden. The garden is located on Sudley Manor Drive in Manassas.

BRWS forays for ferns

Members of the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society held a fern foray along Otter Creek in September. Fifteen species of ferns and fern allies were identified including healthy populations of polypody on a large rock along the creek and small patches of interrupted fern and royal fern. A few specimens of mountain spleenwort (*Asplenium montanum*) and lobed spleenwort (*Asplenium pinnatifidum*) were found on overhanging rock ledges along the lake trail.

Ellington remembered

The Blue Ridge Wildflower Society lost a charter member this past August when Samuel E. Ellington passed away. Ellington was an active area naturalist and was involved in the Roanoke Valley Bird Club, the Science Museum, the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club and the Woodpecker Ridge Nature Center in addition to VNPS. He will be sadly missed by his wife, Dora Lee, also a BRWS charter member, and his son and daughter-in-law, Charlie and Carolyn Ellington.

New Shenandoah officers

The Shenandoah Chapter elected new officers at its October meeting. Carol Gardner is president; Kary Phillips, vice president for programs; Polly Taylor, secretary; Joe Sharrer, treasurer; and Elaine Smith is newsletter editor.

Scholarships announced

Outstanding college and graduate students studying about the nation's wildlife and habitat will have a chance to compete for scholarships to support and promote innovative research or study. Anheuser-Busch has contributed the funding for the Budweiser Conservation Scholarship Program, one of the partnership programs developed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Information and applications can be downloaded via the internet at http://www.NFWF.org. For more information contact Meg Snyder at 202-857-5676, Director, External Affairs, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

•State activity

(Continued from page 4)

Panax trifolius, Viola conspera and *Orontium aquaticum*. The site was nominated by the John Clayton Chapter and is the property of Wayne and Dolores Moyer. VNPS has a slide show on our Registry sites and it is being updated.

Director-at-Large Pat Baldwin reported about his continued field botany work with the William & Mary herbarium and is assisting with plant inventory at Green Haven, a new registry site in his chapter. Also, he supported efforts to prevent Hampton from annexing portions of Sandy Bottom Nature Park for a shopping center.

Allen Belden, Director-at-Large, reported that the DCR Division of Natural Heritage had forwarded to the Soil and Water Division a suggested list of native plants to be used instead of invasive alien plants now suggested in the Virginia State Erosion and Sediment Handbook.

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society reported leading a wildflower walk for teachers from the Virginia Academy of Science.

John Clayton President Michael Sawyer reported listing Green Haven in the Registry Program and that the chapter had donated $1,000 support for an intern and also $1,000 to the Flora of Virginia Project.

The report for Piedmont Chapter, given by Ellie Leonard, reported chapter involvement at Banshee Reeks, a Loudoun County Park. An old farm of mixed forest and old fields saved from a destiny as ballfields, is recognized as being rich with birds, wildlife and native plants.

The Potowmack Chapter experienced another fall plant sale success and also donated a gift to the Conservation Land Trust.

Prince William Wildflower Society President Nancy Vehrs reported continued programs as did Doris True for Shenandoah Chapter who reported that they now meet at Blue Ridge Community College which is the location of the Arboretum of Virginia Natives begun by member Anne Nielsen. Several projects with local Master Gardeners and the Augusta County Bird Club are under way. One involves developing a Birding and Wildlife Trail and the other in developing display gardens at either Grandma Moses' house or the Yount house, two antebellum houses in Verona.

South Hampton Roads will be participating in the Virginia Beach Flower and Garden Show.

Condolences go out to Shenandoah Chapter's Lib Kyger on the passing of Ellsworth, her husband, in December and to Marion Lobstein on the passing of her father, George Coble, also in December.

•Flora

(Continued from page 5)

Joslin Gallatin is laying the groundwork by setting up the 501(c)3 (non-profit foundation) and fund-raising efforts for the Flora Project. Getting those essential elements together is taking time, but these efforts will help to ensure the success of the project.

Continued support of the Flora of Virginia Project by VNPS members is essential to its success. Seed money for the project has been given by Lorna Wass, immediate past-president of the John Clayton Chapter, the John Clayton Chapter, and a number of other VNPS members. The Virginia Academy of Science has also designated funds for the Flora Project. Watch for further updates on the progress in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

Additional comments or questions may be forwarded to Marion Lobstein at mblobst@mnsinc.com or 703-536-7150.

See the address label for your membership expiration date

VNPS Membership/Renewal Form

Name(s)_____

Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

___Individual $15 first year ($20 subsequent years)

___Family $30 ___Student $15

___Patron $50 ___Associate (groups) $40*

___Sustaining $100 ___Life $500

*Please designate one person as delegate for Associate membership

To give a gift membership or join additional chapters: Enclose dues, name, address, and chapter (non-voting memberships in any other than your primary chapter are $5)

I wish to make an additional contribution to ___VNPS or_____Chapter in the amount of ___$10___$25___$50___$100___$(Other)_____

___Check if you do not wish your name to be exchanged with similar organizations

___Check if you do not wish to be listed in a chapter directory

Make check payable to VNPS and mail to:

VNPS Membership Chair, Blandy Experimental Farm, 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2, Boyce, VA 22620

Membership dues are tax deductible in the amount they exceed $5. Contributions are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

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Nicky Staunton, President
Nancy Sorrells, Editor

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The deadline for the next issue is Feb. 1

• Planning

(Continued from page 1)

brief meeting of the VNPS Board of Directors. This meeting will take the place of the normally scheduled March 3 board meeting. Another goal for the evening is to have some time for fun. On Sunday, the directors will translate the harvest of ideas from the day before into goals, objectives and plans for action.

The Stakeholders Questionnaires that have been returned to VNPS at Blandy have had their information entered into a database and will be the springboard for discussion on Saturday morning. It was very encouraging to have received more than 500 responses of the 1,836 mailed to our members! If you missed or misplaced the questionnaire, ask us for one, or if it's still on your desk, do complete and return it. There is still time to have your ideas included.

It is important that if you know now that you will be attending the retreat, please call, send an e-mail or postcard to indicate your interest. It will be helpful in planning how to use the space available at Pocahontas State Park.

If you have a question, please contact the society office 1-540-837-1600 and an answer will be found from among the people planning the event: Jessie Strother, Charles Smith, Nicky Staunton and Leo Stoltz.

Annual Meeting: June 1-3

Once again the members of the Virginia Native Plant Society will be enjoying the Blue Ridge Mountains when they attend the annual meeting, June 1-3, 2001, hosted by the Piedmont Chapter. The Holiday Inn, Winchester, will be headquarters for the meeting and the field trip starting point.

Our lovely customary Virginia spring should give us a wonderful chance to see many beautiful native plants. Watch the March *Bulletin* for details.

• Issues

(Continued from page 1)

Congress did authorize about $1.2 billion conservation appropriations this year, assumes another $400 million will be appropriated for coastal programs during the year, and promises to consider additional funding of $10.4 billion in the succeeding five years. These funds have no guarantee of being available without permanent funding as promised by CARA.

Plans are being made to reintroduce CARA in the next congressional session.

Member generosity supports programs

To each of you who sent a gift of support to VNPS, "Thank you." By mid-December, $7,836 had been received from members in response to the request from the Board of Directors in a letter this fall. From small gifts of $1 to large, ones of $500, all are combined to give your society a very needed boost in meeting our increasing costs due to having an office and expanding educational efforts to protect Virginia's native plants. Costs were exceeding income from membership dues. The funds will also support a long awaited Planning Retreat for Stakeholders in February 2001, covered in a separate article in this *Bulletin*.

If you meant to send a gift of support, but have not yet, it is not too late! Your gift will be welcomed whenever you can send it. VNPS has received gifts of stock shares and bequests during the past year. These gifts are also very helpful. Your generosity is the basis for all of the efforts of your Society and is appreciated.

Nicky Staunton, President

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Bulletin

A publication of the VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Conserving wild flowers and wild places

16th Registry Site

Coastal disjuncts at Greenhaven

The John Clayton Chapter has presented the 16th Virginia Native Plant Society Registry Site, Greenhaven, in Norge in James City County.

The area selected for registry is a deep ravine and its buffering slopes. As spring approaches one can find masses of *Viola conspersa* (dog violet), *Panax trifolius* (dwarf ginseng) and *Orontium aquaticum* (golden-club). In this hardwood bottomland selective logging in the 1980s left *Fagus grandifolia* (American beech) and allowed *Liriodendron tulipifera* (tuliptree) to emerge.

This special habitat which is in the York River watershed is an example of the calcareous ravine communities in the coastal plain of Virginia. In these areas are found distinct flora termed mountain/coastal disjuncts because they are primarily found in the western piedmont and mountain regions and, while seldom found along the fall-line and coastal plain, do inhabit the calcareous ravines. The soils which give rise to these plant communities are high in calcium and other nutrients derived from substrate that contains fossil shells of the Yorktown Formation. The chapter's other registered site, Grove Creek, is cut by an even deeper ravine and fossil shells have been found there.

These special ravines are important to the scientific world because they may represent remnant flora from the period ca. 8,000-10,000 years ago when mountain species probably occurred all the way to the sea. Several interesting botanical questions arise and demand answers, thus the preservation of such habitats is essential to the ongoing knowledge of our diverse natural resources.

(See Greenhaven, page 7)

VNPS chapter forming in Fredericksburg

Approximately 50 area residents gathered on January 23 for an initial chapter organizational meeting at George Washington's Ferry Farm in Fredericksburg.

The area's earliest chapter inquiries came from Alma Withers and Hal Wiggins and were met with supportive response from our outgoing VNPS Membership Chair, Charles Smith. In the new year, Nicky Staunton and Mary Painter teamed to reignite VNPS membership growth and chapter development. Given the engaging group of Fredericksburg area champions, Nicky and Mary found all the makings of a dynamic new chapter base.

Kirsten Krueger of Stafford, a Ph.D. ecologist recently relocated from the Seattle area, has been professionally dedicated to natural resource inventory and habitat assessment. Hal Wiggins envisions botanical forays

(See New chapter, page 8)

Conservation happens through VNPS Site Registry

In 1990, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries entered into a project to log the forest in the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area. This would have involved the big-wheeled logging trucks crossing the massive trillium display area. The prospect of this destruction alarmed the Virginia Native Plant Society and the wheels of conservation action rushed to get ahead of the 18-wheelers. Thus the trillium fields of the Thompson WMA in Fauquier County became our first Registry Site. When the botanical value of the area was brought to the attention of DGIF, a memorandum of agreement was drawn and a cooperative effort was established for the stewardship of this unique area.

Although registry carries no legal status, in Campbell County the Rosebay Rhododendron Community would have been adversely impacted when the town of Altavista proposed a sewer line through the property but recognition brought an agreement to move the line.

From its inception, the program

(See Registry, page 8)

From the President . . . . . .

The things I prize of greatest wealth
Are just the common things of earth,
The rain, the sun, the grass, the trees,
The flowers, the birds, the glorious breeze
Clouds that pass and stars that shine,
Mountains, valleys, all are mine.
Rivers broad and open sea
are riches none can take from me.
And, God is here in every hand
Upon the sea, upon the land.
So day by day my thanks I give
That with these common things I live.
by Leonard G. Natt Kemper
From *The Naturalist's Almanac* 5th ed. 1976
John F. Gardner, Editor

This poem reminded me that I collect a lot of "memory photographs." What I see is mine. Then I read that they "are riches none can take from me." True, not from my "memory photograph" collection, but most assuredly, the reality is that they are being taken from me!

Daily in Virginia, natural wetlands are mitigated away through constructed "permanent" temporary wetlands. Mature and immature trees become chips. The only remaining riverfront watershed is approved for development by elected supervisors overriding their zoning board despite unstable soils. Invasive vines cover and kill trees. Improper pruning is transforming roadside trees into grotesque forms, with ugly torn branch stumps open for disease. Ground covers such as English ivy, are "forgotten" and leave the earth to totally cover trees, eventually killing them. Areas of Virginia seem to be war zones on flora.

VNPS praises our beautiful working native plants, but the other side of the coin is also why VNPS exists. We in VNPS are organized to speak for our plants and their ecosystems; working on their behalf; protecting them through educational persuasiveness. It is an arduous task. Fortunately, we have a growing membership - approaching 2,000. The new Fredericksburg area chapter will bring possibly 20 new members initially.

Virginians list their state's environment as their number one concern. VNPS works to support fellow conservation groups and our state's natural resources managers as we all move toward assuring natural areas for the years ahead. Unfortunately, too few of our elected representatives share this vision. Who do they represent when they vote? Are unchecked legislative habits too difficult to change?

Legislators who do respect Virginia's natural wealth should be thanked. Please take time to contact the legislators in Richmond who did vote on bills that will help our native plants' ecosystems. As for those who did not, they need to know that you have higher expectations of them.

Proposed amendments to the approved 2000-2002 Budget would constrict the work of all the Department of Conservation and Recreation's departments, but none more than Virginia's Division of Natural Heritage. Ted Scott and Ruth Douglas personally delivered VNPS opposition to proposed budgetary amendments. They are thanked for their efforts. Thanks also to each of you for every effort you made during this session of the General Assembly. You are essential in the work of VNPS!

Your replies to the VNPS questionnaire poured into our Blandy office (almost 450 of a mailing of 1,760) and Karen York did a super job of distilling the answers into a usable database. The all-members' stakeholders meeting to plan for the future of VNPS was February 24. Your directors hope you joined them at Pocahontas State Park for this event.

On another front, we are almost ready for the Annual Meeting 2001 gathering June 1-3 in Winchester. The Piedmont Chapter invites you to come for this native plant weekend: Virginia Native Plant Society is for Birds! Our workshops and field trips will highlight plant/bird relationships. We are privileged that George Fenwick, president and founder of the American Bird Conservancy, will speak on Saturday evening. Finally, have you been to the VNPS website: www.vnps.org? It is getting better and better. Sylvia Stone-Orli is continuing to work on it and has posted a slideshow of our Wildflower of the Year native plants with music for you to enjoy! Share our address with friends.

Your President, Nicky Staunton

You are cordially invited...

To: The VNPS Annual Meeting

Hosted by the Piedmont Chapter on June 1, 2 & 3

The streams are thawing and winter is fleeting,
It's time to plan for the Annual Meeting.
Our host-ers this year (brave souls for not cryin'),
Are the Piedmont Chapter and their prez, Jody Lyon.

Jim Gilbert is coming from far Minnesota,
He's a naturalist, author, and the first talk we'll go ta.
His "phenological observations"
Cover things like leaf drop and bird migrations,
Sprouting and nesting and animal mating
To me, it all sounds just fascinating.

George Fenwick will share his knowlege of birds.
The Board of Directors will have a few words.
Pack your sunscreen, your hat and your best walking shoes.
There'll be lectures and field trips and, maybe, canoes!

See Ice Mountain where always the cool air is flowing,
or Mary Painter's to see what cool natives are growing.
If an uphill hike sounds just a little scary,
Go to Blandy for Monarchs, Hairstreaks, Fritillary.

Maybe Bear's Den Mountain or Calme's Neck Bluffs,
Banshee Reeks Park and if that's not enoughs,
Tour the gardens at Airlie, have some tea, see a swan.
If you're not tuckered out, there'll be birding at dawn!

If your thirst for nature isn't satisfied yet, oh
Take in a workshop on growing a meadow.
There are many more trips that are too hard to rhyme,
Suffice it to say, you will have a good time.

Consider this verse your engraved invitation
Meet friends, see sights, get some new information.
This briefly is all I can tell you today.
Soon more will be coming your way,

Like schedules and lists and preciser location,
Hotels and directions and form registration.
Now, mark in your datebook for June 1,2,3
Head up to Winchester and sit next to me! *.....Gina Yurkonis*

Virginia Wildflower Celebration 2001

The nine chapters of the Virginia Native Plant Society celebrate the rich diversity of the native flora of the Commonwealth each spring. Society members will share their enthusiasm for wild plants and wild places on field trips and wildflower walks, and during garden tours, plant sales, and a variety of other programs throughout the state. The celebration will culminate with the annual meeting in June.

You are cordially invited to any of the activities listed below; they are all open to the public. As some events require reservations, fees or additional instructions, use the contact information provided to obtain further information. Plants propagated by members will be available at chapter plant sales.

The 2001 Virginia Wildflower of the Year, trailing-arbutus, is an unpretentious, little evergreen shrub that trails on the forest floor. *Epigaea repens* is an early harbinger of spring, much beloved for braving the late winter cold. It typically grows in sandy or rocky, acid soils in woods and clearings, often on hillsides and banks, including road banks, especially under oaks and pines or hemlocks. Although *Epigaea repens* is found in most Virginia's counties, it seldom is common and usually is rare, localized by its specialized ecology. In the Washington, D.C. area its average first blooming date is April 5.

Wildflower Calendar of Events

Great Falls Park Wildflower Walk – Sunday, March 18, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Led by Marion Lobstein. (mblobst@mnsinc.com or 703-536-7150 for reservations)

South Hampton Roads Plant Sale - Saturday, March 24, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Francis Land House, Virginia Beach. Rt. 264 E to Rosemont Rd., left onto Rosemont and 2 lights. Right onto Va. Beach Blvd. at 3rd light. Land House on right. (Karen Renda 757-495-2454)

15th Annual Lahr Symposium - Saturday, March 31. U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, D.C. Native plant lectures and sales. (202-245-4521 for brochure or www.nationalarboretum.gov)

Wildflower Fair – Saturday, March 31-Monday, April 2. Cheekwood Botanical Garden, Nashville, TN. (615-353-2148 or www.cheekwood.org)

Teddy Roosevelt Island Tour – Sunday, April 1, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Smithsonian Associates tour led by Marion Lobstein (202-357-3030 or www.residentassociates.org/rap)

Botany Walk - Friday, April 6. Audubon Naturalist Society walk by Cris Fleming, Potowmack (301-652-9188 or www.audubonnaturalist.org)

C&O Canal (Carderock Area) – Saturday, April 7, 10 a.m.-noon & 1-3 p.m. Smithsonian Associates tour led by Cris Fleming (202-357-3030 or www.residentassociates.org/rap)

Potowmack Chapter Wildflower Walk at Scott's Run Nature Preserve - Sunday, April 8, 1-4 p.m. Led by Cris Fleming. Meet lower parking lot on Rt. 193, .6 mile west of Beltway. Limit 16, reservations necessary. (301-657-9289)

Wildflower Walk at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park in Centreville/ Chantilly – Sunday, April 8, 1-2:30 p.m. (Fairfax Co. Park Authority at www.co.fairfax.va.us/parks/parks.htm or 703-631-0013)

Bird Hike at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park in Centreville/ Chantilly – Tuesday, April 10, 8-9:30 a.m. (Fairfax Co. Park Authority at www.co.fairfax.va.us/parks/parks.htm or 703-631-0013)

Waid Park in Rocky Mount – Saturday, April 14. Sponsored by Blue Ridge Chapter (Julie Alexander, JAlexa7266@aol.com, 540-427-0117)

Great Falls Park Wildflower Walk – Sunday, April 15, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Led by Marion Lobstein. (mblobst@mnsinc.com or 703-536-7150 for reservations)

Balls Bluff Wildflower Walk – Sunday, April 15, 2:30-4:30 p.m. Led by Marion Lobstein. (mblobst@mnsinc.com or 703-536-7150 for reservations)

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden Fair & Plant Sale - Friday, April 20-Saturday, April 21. Richmond (804-262-9887)

Botany Walk - Friday, April 20. Audubon Naturalist Society walk led by Cris Fleming, Potowmack. (301-652-9188 or www.audubonnaturalist.org)

Reddish Knob Walk - Saturday, April 21, 1 p.m. Sponsored by Shenandoah Chapter; hope to see iris vernal. Meet First Va. Bank, Bridgewater. (Carol Gardner, w-cgardner@rica.net or 540-828-2807 after 5 p.m.)

Green Hill Park in Salem – Saturday, April 21. Sponsored by Blue Ridge Chapter; see hillsides of trillium. (Julie Alexander, JAlexa7266@aol.com, 540-427-0117)

Potowmack Chapter Native Orchid Walk and Program - Thursday, April 26, 6:30 p.m. Hidden Oaks Nature Center, Annandale, Va. Led by Dr. Douglas Gill, University Maryland. (703-684-8622)

Potowmack Chapter Garden Tour - Sunday, April 29. (Billie Trump at 703-960-1476)

Prince William Wildflower Society's Annual Garden Tour - Sunday, April 29, noon-5 p.m. Three PWWS members' gardens featured. (For directions or brochure, Nancy Vehrs nvehrs@attglobal.net or 703-368-2898)

U.S. National Arboretum Tour – Sunday, April 29, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Smithsonian Associates tour led by Marion Lobstein (202-357-3030 or www.residentassociates.org/rap)

United Plant Savers Fund Raiser - Friday, May 4-Sunday, May 6. Cultivation & propagation of medicinal plants at Indian Pipe Outdoor Technical School, Markham, Va. (540-675-1122 or drmtime@shentel.net or www.dreamtimeherbalschool.com)

Botany Walk - Friday, May 4. Audubon Naturalist Society walk led by Cris Fleming, Potowmack (301-652-9188 or www.audubonnaturalist.org)

Glen Allen – Saturday, May 5. Sponsored by Blue Ridge Chapter (Julie Alexander, JAlexa7266@aol.com, 540-427-0117)

Wildflower Calendar of Events

Thompson Wildlife Management Area and State Arboretum of Va. – Saturday, May 5, 8:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Smithsonian Associates tour led by Marion Lobstein (202-357-3030 or www.residentassociates.org/rap)

Bird Hike at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park in Centreville/Chantilly – Saturday, May 5, 8-10 a.m. (Fairfax Co. Park Authority at www.co.fairfax.va.us/parks/parks.htm or 703-631-0013)

Audubon Nature Fair - Sunday, May 6. Chevy Chase, MD. (301-652-9188, x32)

C&O Canal (Carderock Area) – Sunday, May 6, 10 a.m.-noon & 1-3 p.m. Smithsonian Associates tour led by Marion Lobstein (202-357-3030 or www.residentassociates.org/rap)

Historic Bartram's Garden Native Plant Sale – Sunday, May 6. Philadelphia. (215-729-5281 or www.libertynet.org/bartram)

Crab Tree Falls Walk - Saturday, May 12, 1 p.m. Sponsored by Shenandoah Chapter. (Carol Gardner at w-cgardner@rica.net or 540-828-2807 after 5 p.m.)

State Arboretum of Virginia Garden Fair & Plant Sale – Saturday, May 12-Sunday, May 13. Boyce, Va. (540-837-1758 or www.virginia.edu/~blandy)

Blue Ridge Chapter Plant Sale - Saturday, May 12 at Virginia Western Community College (Julie Alexander, JAlexa7266@aol.com or 540-427-0117)

Prince William Wildflower Society Annual Plant Sale – Saturday, May 12, 9 a.m.-noon. Bethel Lutheran Church in Manassas (Nancy Arrington, 703-368-8431).

Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve Spring Native Plant Sale - Saturday, May 12-Sunday, May 13. New Hope, Pa. (215-862-2924 or www.bhwp.org)

Brandywine Conservancy Native Plant Sale - Saturday, May 12-Sunday, May 13. Chadds Ford, Pa. (www.brandywinemuseum.org or 610-388-8327)

Rockingham Springs Arboretum - Wednesday, May 16, 1 p.m. Sponsored by Shenandoah Chapter. Arboretum has over 100 native plant species. Meet at the Valley Mall, Harrisonburg on Rt. 33. (Carol Gardner at w-cgardner@rica.net or 540-828-2807 after 5 p.m.)

Green Spring Garden Days/ Potowmack Chapter Plant Sale - Saturday, May 19, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Green Spring Gardens Park, (off Rt. 236 at 4603 Green Spring Road) Alexandria, Va. (703-642-5173)

Grassy Hill Natural Heritage Area – Saturday, May 19. Sponsored by Blue Ridge Chapter; led by Paul Clarke of Va. Department of Conservation & Recreation. (Julie Alexander, JAlexa7266@aol.com, 540-427-0117)

Great Falls Park Wildflower Walk – Sunday, May 20, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Led by Marion Lobstein. (703-536-7150 or mblobst@mnsinc.com for reservations)

Roaring Run Trip – Saturday June 2. Sponsored by Blue Ridge Chapter; hope to see galax. (Julie Alexander, JAlexa7266@aol.com, 540-427-0117)

Wintergreen Symposium

The Wintergreen Nature Foundation will host its 18th Annual Spring Wildflower Symposium from May 11-13. This weekend-long event is held each year at Wintergreen Resort in the Blue Ridge Mountains of central Virginia. Participants in the symposium will create their own schedule of guided hikes, workshops and lectures from over 50 offerings. There are opportunities for learning plant identification, forest ecology, wildflower gardening, propagation and photography from some of the region's best naturalists and educators. For a brochure including the schedule, email The Wintergreen Nature Foundation at info@twnf.org, or check out the web site at www.twnf.org or call 804-325-7451.

Garden tour to help Galapagos plants

In an effort to help support plant conservation in the Galapagos Islands, Landscape designer John C. Magee and Second Nature, Inc. have teamed up to host this year's Gardening for Galapagos garden tour. This guided bus tour will visit six gardens in the Northern Virginia area which exhibit the beauty and grace of plants native to the East Coast of the United States. Tickets will be available through the Gardening for Galapagos Foundation and Second Nature, Inc. at $20 per ticket. The tour will be held on Saturday, May 12, rain or shine. Tickets are limited and must be purchased in advance. The money raised will go directly to the Botany Department of the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos Islands. Gardening for Galapagos hopes to appeal to the gardeners of the world to help protect the unique and beautiful flora of the archipelago. Contact the Gardening for Galapagos Foundation at 1-800-283-7115, or John Magee at 703-478-9428 or at www.rootbound.com, or John Magee's web site at http://members.aol.com/euphorbia.

Mrs. Lammot du Pont Copeland

It is with great sadness and respect that we inform you of Mrs. Lammot du Pont Copeland's death on January 25 at the age of 94. In the last few years nearly 100 of our members have had the unique experience of visiting the singular woodland garden she created at Mt. Cuba, her home in Delaware. Through her foresight, garden lovers will be able to continue enjoying the legacy she has left us. Mrs. Copeland was a Life Member of the Virginia Native Plant Society.

Be wary when purchasing native plants

If you were ordering native plants and wanted to be sure they were not wild-collected, what would you do to assure that they were not dug in the wild?

It is a question as well as a problem that continues to confront us from time to time as it did recently when a Virginia garden center issued its spring catalogue. Listed in it were *Trillium grandiflorum* for $5 each. That is a bargain, and any unsuspecting gardener would jump at the opportunity.

It also attracted the attention of a Maryland nurseryman who had some experience growing trillium from seed as well as propagating them by division. He immediately sounded an alarm on the basis that no one could afford to propagate trillium plants and sell them for $5 and alerted several members of VNPS since the catalog was from a Virginia garden center. We too were curious (and suspicious), but we also knew the director of the garden center involved. We knew that that particular individual would never sell wild-collected plants, so we called the director.

To make a long story short, it turned out that the garden center was buying the plants from a nursery in Tennessee which bought its plants from several suppliers. Now we were certain that the plants were wild-collected, because there were three separate businesses that had to make a profit to make it worth their time and we are talking about growing them on after propagation for three to more than seven years, depending on the method of propagation, before they would blossom. That's impossible to do and sell to the ultimate customer for $5. Yet the plants were certified by a Tennessee agricultural inspector as being "Nursery Grown."

The "Nursery Grown" label was the third element, following the low price and coming from at least two nurseries in Tennessee, that raised a red flag. Bill Cullina, in his book, *The New England Wild Flower Society Guide to Growing and Propagating Wildflowers of the United States and Canada* (see VNPS August 2000 *Bulletin*, p. 8), says of trillium "Nearly all plants for sale in the United States are originally wild-collected plants and 'laundered' and then sold as 'Nursery Grown' plants." Thus "Nursery Grown" is a euphemism used by less-than-legitimate nurseries, or people who just don't know the difference, to suggest to their customers that these particular native plants are not wild-collected. Legitimate nurseries will advertise their plants as "Nursery Propagated" and VNPS highly recommends to its members that they buy native plants only from nurseries or garden centers that certify their plants to be "Nursery Propagated." The garden center has canceled its order and will take a loss on the Tennessee trillium.

Ted Scott, Shenandoah Chapter

Classes

Field Botany at Blandy

Have you ever wanted to know how to identify a wildflower, shrub, tree, or even a weed growing in the wild or in your garden? Do you learn best by hands-on and fieldtrip experiences? Would you like to be part of a state-wide effort to develop a modern identification manual or *Flora* for the plants of Virginia? If the answer to any or all of these questions is "yes," Field Botany at Blandy is the course for you!

For the 10th summer, Marion Lobstein will be offering her popular Field Botany course (EVEC 493/793) at Blandy Experimental Farm. This three-credit course may be taken for undergraduate or graduate credit as well as audited. Participants will meet 9 a.m. to 4 p.m Monday through Thursday, June 25 - July 12.

This exciting field-based course will cover the basic principles of botany with emphasis on the classification, identification and evolution of flowering plants. Lectures and laboratories will cover the evolution and life cycles of major groups of plants, structure and function of plant vegetative (stems, roots and leaves) and reproductive organs, characteristics of common flowering plant families of the Mid-Atlantic region, ecology of plant communities, and history of botanical exploration in Virginia from the colonial to the modern period.

Field work will focus on the use of plant dichotomous (identification) key, other aids to identify species of flowering plants and on field recognition of flowering plant family characteristics. This year's class will begin field testing dichotomous keys that are projected to be used in the new *Flora of Virginia*, an identification manual for native and naturalized plants that occur in Virginia (See article, page 7). The class supports teachers in implementing Virginia's State SOL requirements pertaining to botany.

For information call Marion Lobstein at 703-536-7150, email mblobst@mnsinc.com or visit her webpage (www.mnsinc.com/mblobst/) or Blandy's webpage (www.virginia.edu/~blandy).

USDA wildflower ID course

In April and May, VNPS Botany Chair Stan Shetler will be teaching two sections of Spring Wildflower Identification in the evening program of the United States Department of Agriculture Graduate School. This is an eight-week, two-credit course, with seven lectures and four fieldtrips. The first section will be taught at the grad school headquarters at Capital Galleries in Washington, D.C., and the other section will be in Leesburg at the Rust Sanctuary of the Audubon Naturalist Society. For details, contact the USDA Graduate School at the toll-free number 1-888-744-GRAD or the Web site *http://grad.usda.gov.*

Progress continues with Flora of Virginia project

Significant progress on the *Flora of Virginia* Project continues to be made. Chris Ludwig, chief biologist for the Virginia Natural Heritage Program, is actively working on the preliminary format for the *Flora of Virginia*. Members of the Virginia Flora Committee (Virginia Academy of Science) and representatives from other groups such VNPS will be asked to serve on an advisory committee for the project and will have an opportunity to comment on the format. An information brochure about the project is now complete and is available by request from Marion Lobstein at 703-536-7150 or by email at mblobst@mnsinc.com.

Marion Lobstein continues to work closely with Chris Ludwig, Joslin Gallatin, and members of the Virginia Flora Committee, as well as keeping President Nicky Staunton and other VNPS board members apprised of the progress of the project. Both Marion and Chris participated in the February VNPS retreat and discussed details of the project with participants. Marion also gave a presentation on the project at a February meeting of Virginia Community College science faculty and staff from around the state. Copies of a questionnaire about community college faculty, staff and student participation in the project were given out at this meeting.

Joslin Gallatin is making progress on setting up a 501(c)3 (non-profit foundation) for the project and has begun fund-raising efforts to support it. The 501(c)3 should be in place by mid-spring. Laying this groundwork is taking time, but these efforts will help to ensure the project's success. An interim bank account has been set up to handle funds and Dr. Rex Baird (chair of the Virginia Flora Committee and Professor Emeritus, University of Virginia at Wise, formerly Clinch Valley College) is managing this account.

VNPS member response to the *Flora of Virginia* Project questionnaire has been excellent, with some responses still being received. A database with the names and contact information of individuals interested in supporting the project and how they are willing to help has been established. There are currently 172 VNPS responses in this database. Of the total number, 103 have offered to help with specific aspects. The following is a summary of those interests by question type: field test keys – 60; review of format choices – 52; development and analysis of questionnaires – 19; review and development of accessory materials - 16; web site development – 4; financial supporters – 6; fund raising – 6; publisher contacts – 3; writing grants – 8; legal assistance – 3; artwork assistance – 16; publicity – 8; correspondence/mailings/bookkeeping – 18; other - 17.

Support of this project by the Virginia Native Plant Society is crucial to its success and has, in fact, given it significant momentum. Keep up-to-date with the project by visiting www.dcr.state.va.us/dnh/vaflora.htm.

Marion Lobstein, Flora of Virginia Project

Tax refund can help Virginia's environment

Looking for an easy way to help Virginia's environment and natural resources, or help provide outdoor recreation in your community? If you're receiving a state tax refund you can donate any or all of it for such use.

Designate your voluntary contribution on lines 20 and 21 of Schedule ADJ, to accompany the Virginia Tax Return (760). If you choose the "Open Space Conservation and Recreation Fund," write in the numbers 6-8. Or, "Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund" write in 7-1. A contribution to either helps preserve resources critical to Virginia and to future generations. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Open Space fund has helped purchase state natural areas such as North Landing River, Poor Mountain and the Pinnacle.

Virginia taxpayers who aren't receiving refunds can always contribute to these funds directly by mailing a check, payable to Treasurer of Virginia, to DCR / 203 Governor St., Suite 301, Richmond, VA 23219. For more information: Virginia Department of Taxation at 804-367-8031 or online at www.tax.state.va.us. For questions about either contribution fund, call the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation at 804-786-7961 or check the Internet at www.dcr.state.va.us.

Forest fragmentation proceedings available

Proceedings of the Forest Fragmentation 2000 Conference conclude that private forests are being nibbled to death. The report suggests that much of the movement of America's private forests toward developed uses and smaller fragments comes from Dynamic Unintended Consequences (DUCs) fed by common trends and policies. The 389-page proceedings is a compilation of more than 50 papers presented September 17-20, 2000, in Annapolis, Md. It's now available at http://www.sampsongroup.com, click on Fragmentation 2000.

•*Greenhaven*

(Continued from page 1)

Wayne and Delores Moyer's interest in protecting this exemplary area is easily recognized by the fact that Dr. Moyer's career encompassed activities in science education. The couple has instilled their conservation views in their daughter and son-in-law both of whom are historical interpreters at the Jamestown Foundation.

Dr. Moyer recently shared his conservation philosophy with the John Clayton Chapter:

"We don't view ourselves as part of a movement, conservation or otherwise, but simply as people who live lightly upon the land and wish to pass it on better than we found it – in the sense of being on the path to natural recovery from previous uses. We believe in the interconnected web of existence and seek to live within that web. This is a religious commitment for us."

Boleyn Dale, VNPS Site Registry Chair

•New chapter is tenth for VNPS

(Continued from page 1)

(canoe or river-raft style) along the privately held peninsula tract known as Crow's Nest. He hopes to have those lands included within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service refuge system. Kiki Keske the garden supervisor for Kenmore and Ferry Farm and Ann Gorrell, of Fredericksburg, have already established a wildflower trail at Kenmore. Debbie Kirk of Spotsylvania has developed a Junior Master Gardeners group, the only one outside of Texas. Debbie and Mary Casebolt have helped members establish a youth garden. Many chapter petitioners are already Master Gardeners.

There is great potential in these diverse talents as well as in the area's available meeting facilities and native plant activity opportunities. Nicky and Mary agreed that this group has the potential to "hit the ground running." The chapter development process, however, is not without its challenges. The chapter petitioners require and deserve our support in structuring their chapter, in the various paperwork passages, and through guideline meetings with Nicky and Mary.

There has been a rather long quietus since our South Hampton Roads Chapter got its legs in 1991, but now the Fredericksburg Area Chapter will be our 10th chapter within the Commonwealth of Virginia. This chapter will be formed out of the Prince William group. From its inception our Prince William chapter has maintained a positively homogenous group of members with membership activities most often centered in the Manassas area. Yet three key circumstances have merited our attention:

1. The considerable distances and drive time faced by Prince William members from Stafford, Spotsylvania and King George counties.
2. The growing support in the Fredericksburg area for a new chapter.
3. Evidence of a sufficient member base and leadership strength to effectively maintain a new chapter there.

The missing link can become a common cord within the community -- a unifying theme of native plants. There is an undeniable spark within this group of Fredericksburg area citizens, but it should be noted that there are other chapter flames which need tending throughout the Commonwealth. For instance, there is mounting evidence of new chapter development in the Blacksburg and Eastern Shore/Tappahannock areas. (Administratively speaking, we will be in your backyards before the year is out.)

We also recognize the challenges confronting our oversized chapters covering multiple counties. Mary will explore these concerns and seek positive means of restructuring. But, that's another story...for a future *Bulletin* issue.

Mary Painter, VNPS Membership Chair

•Registry

(Continued from page 1)

has been based on a nonbinding voluntary agreement between VNPS and the landowner(s) in the public and private sectors. VNPS offers assistance in plant identification and, therefore, preserves species that may otherwise have gone unidentified. Although the landowner forfeits no rights to the property, the chance he will destroy valuable habitat is reduced.

When a chapter discovers a possible site for registry, it is its responsibility to study the area and propose a nomination giving the significant value of the property including a plant inventory. Sites to be considered must have regional or state significance, which may be established through consideration of a combination of characteristics such as:

- •A diversity of plants native to Virginia or the surrounding region.
- •Plants that are rare, endangered, disjunct from or peripheral to the species' major stands in the state or unusual in habitat or location.
- •An exemplary occurrence of a habitat or plant community.
- •Unusual or persisting variation of a species.
- •Having special or unique potential to create awareness in the community.
- •Be mainly uncultivated.

The State Registry Committee which receives the nomination is composed of two VNPS members, one of whom is the chairman; representatives from the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage; The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Chapter; and the academic community. When a nomination is accepted a plaque is presented to the landowner in recognition of a commitment to protect an important part of Virginia's natural heritage. The nominating chapter then accepts the responsibility of further assisting the landowner and the program through an annual monitoring and report to VNPS.

At times the site does not support rare and endangered plants, but rather the habitat is significant. Such is Cahas Mountain in Franklin County and Bear Garden in Buckingham County. In Fauquier County, a county-owned wetlands at Carter's Run, threatened by the potential of future development, needed recognition as a possible natural area and educational facility.

The location of the registered site may not be open to the public. Such is the case with Mueller Marsh, a very special place in Augusta County so significant that the Division of Natural Heritage has now recognized it as Folly Mills Natural Area Preserve.

Two Williamsburg sites are not open to the public. An area off the Country Road in the Carter's Grove vicinity is owned by Colonial Williamsburg. In nearby Norge, Greenhaven is on private land. Both sites are notable for their location along the Yorktown Formation -- the geology of which presents unique calcareous ravine habitats.

The public is welcome on the trails of the Buffalo Creek Natural Area which is owned and maintained by Westvaco Corporation in Campbell and Bedford counties. How many know that in Northern Virginia there are several sites: Huntley Meadows, Riverbend Park, Scotts Run Park, James Long Park and Runneymede Park? Moreover, how many have visited the Manassas National Battlefield Park where several meadow areas are recognized by our program?

Boleyn Dale, VNPS Site Registry Chairman

Announcing a five-part series:

Planning for Habitat Conservation.

In the May issue of the *Bulletin*, a five-part series on the various ways to plan for habitat conservation will begin. The series of articles is intended as an overview, and to provide a few examples of successful and helpful ways taxpayers and professionals can plan for the protection and conservation of habitat in Virginia. Topics will include:

1)Protection of streams and riparian areas and the connection with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act
2)Natural heritage programs and acquisition
3)Land use planning, forest conservation and fragmentation
4)Geographic information systems (GIS) as a planning tool
5)Ecosystem-based management: a case study.

If you have an interest in writing an article on any of these topics, please contact me as soon as possible at sylvatica9@juno.com or 6004 Windward Drive, Burke Va 22015 or 703-323-5278 (evenings).

Jessie Strother, Conservation Chair

Crow's Nest environmental assessment issued

Toward the end of 2000 the United States Department of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service issued its long awaited Final Environmental Assessment for the Crow's Nest property. The service is recommending that its agency purchase the property and that it be managed as part of the existing Potomac River National Wildlife Refuge Complex, located in Woodbridge, Virginia. The name of the refuge would be the Accokeek Creek National Wildlife Refuge, taken from the tidal creek that runs along the northern perimeter of the property. VNPS field trips to the site may be held this spring. Keep an eye out on the web page and in your chapter newsletters.

Jessie Strother
VNPS Conservation Chair

Controlling Japanese honeysuckle

Here's a tip from some of our native plant friends in Maryland: Pulling Japanese honeysuckle by hand in the winter and very early spring is effective. If you pull much later than that, the roots tend to re-sprout easily and just give you more pulling. In reviewing an area treated this way last year, the winter-pulled area is 99.9 percent honeysuckle free while the late spring-pulled area is about 50 percent free. I had a Brownie troop pull some at one point and then had them turn the vines into wreathes for a nice crafty-project that they really enjoyed.

Karyn Molines, Maryland

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VNPS Membership/Renewal Form

Name(s)_____
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City_____State_____Zip_____
___Individual $15 first year ($20 subsequent years)
___Family $30 ___Student $15
___Patron $50 ___Associate (groups) $40*
___Sustaining $100 ___Life $500

*Please designate one person as delegate for Associate membership

To give a gift membership or join additional chapters: Enclose dues, name, address, and chapter (non-voting memberships in any other than your primary chapter are $5)

I wish to make an additional contribution to ___VNPS or_____Chapter in the amount of ___$10___$25___$50___$100___$(Other)_____
___Check if you do not wish your name to be exchanged with similar organizations
___Check if you do not wish to be listed in a chapter directory

Make check payable to VNPS and mail to:

VNPS Membership Chair, Blandy Experimental Farm, 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2, Boyce, VA 22620

Membership dues are tax deductible in the amount they exceed $5. Contributions are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

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The deadline for the next issue is April 1

Members respond to questionnaire in large numbers

Last November, members were mailed a questionnaire asking for opinions and input in preparation for long-term planning efforts at the 2001 Stakeholders' Meeting held recently at Pocahontas State Park. The response was overwhelming with 421 members, over 24 percent, returning the questionnaire. Surveys rarely get more than a 6 percent response rate.

Who are our members? Why did they join? What are their favorite activities? What can VNPS do better? These are the types of questions answered by members. The answers were very revealing and provide a strong indication of what members want their organization to do.

For example, when asked why they joined, 330 respondents, or 78 percent, said that they wanted to support the conservation of Virginia habitat. The next most important reason was to show support for VNPS programs (65 percent). Members also said that they joined to stay current on native plant issues (62 percent), to learn to identify native plants (56 percent) and to learn about gardening (55 percent).

Members were asked what their favorite activities are at the state and chapter level. For state level activities, the newsletter (the *Bulletin*), field trips and the annual workshops were the favorites. The favorite activities at the chapter level are plant sales, meetings and plant rescues. The most enjoyable activities for members were the field trips, learning about native plants, being outdoors and sharing time with other people with similar interests.

The questionnaire responses provided strong guidance for what members want their organization to do in the future. A majority of the respondents (68 percent) indicated educational programs as the most important effort the state can undertake. The newsletter (the *Bulletin*) was the next favored activity (65 percent). Members also felt strongly that VNPS should continue working for alien invasive plant control (61 percent), favorable legislation (56 percent), publication of informational materials (56 percent), providing lists of commercial plant sources that sell nursery-propagated (47 percent) and sponsoring field trips (43 percent).

It was interesting to find out who our members are. Seventy-eight percent of our members are over 46 years of age with a full 25 percent being 66 years or older. Member educational background included 37 percent holding bachelors' degrees, 37 percent masters' degrees, and 13 percent having doctoral degrees. Most are amateurs in the field of botany (80 percent), with the remainder, about 20 percent, being professionals.

To make membership more attractive, some members felt that daytime meetings and sub-chapters would make it easier to attend events. Members also said VNPS could become more effective by working more closely with other organizations with similar interests and attracting younger members.

How can we use this information to guide and improve VNPS? The members' responses to the questionnaire formed the basis for discussions at the Stakeholders' Meeting. The ideas, goals and strategies developed at the Stakeholders' Meeting will be forged into a plan that will direct VNPS for the next 10 to 15 years. But the information supplied by the members in the questionnaire doesn't stop there. VNPS will continue to look at the members' responses as new questions arise, and chapters will be able to use this data to structure activities and better serve their membership.

Special thanks for the project go to Nicky Staunton, Leo Stoltz, Karen York, Nancy Sorrells, and to all of the VNPS members who took the time to fill out the questionnaire. It is the simple but powerful act of this last group that will keep our organization alive.

Charles Smith, Fundraising Chair

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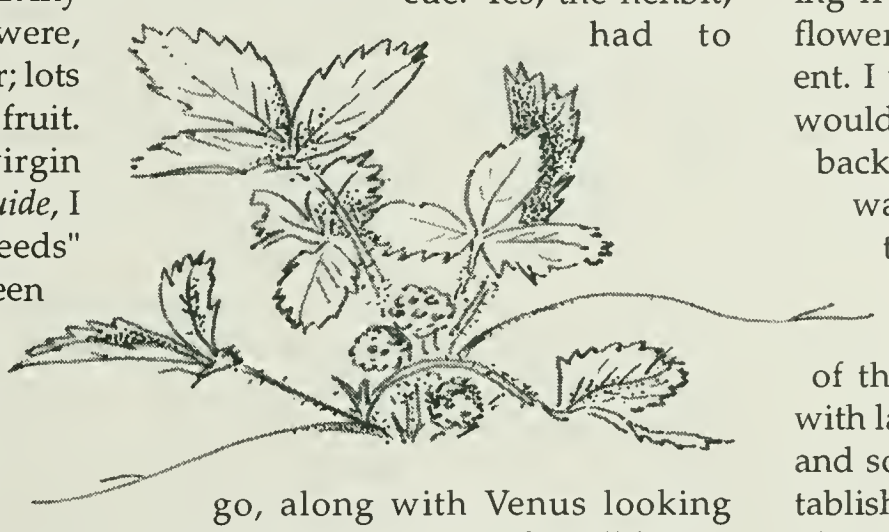
Conserving wild flowers and wild places

Wild strawberries are a delightful Virginia native

Wild strawberries, the elusive fruit of early summer, revealed themselves to me last year for the first time. I knew the plants, when a few years ago, I discovered them growing in my front yard in Toano. There they were, in the lawn, just outside the door; lots of plants, some flowers but no fruit. That summer, armed with a virgin copy of *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide*, I set out to identify all of the "weeds" growing in the yard. It had not been much earlier that I had joined the Virginia Native Plant Society and had begun to give some serious attention to local flora. Among the strawberries I discovered henbit, *Lamium* sp.; Venus' looking glass, *Specularia perfoliata;* pussytoes, *Antennaria* sp.; Indian strawberries, *Duchesnea indica* and Quaker-ladies, *Houstonia* sp., all of whom were a revelation to this Alexandria-born, former graphic designer. But I was a horticulturist now and had some very definite plans for that front lawn. I had a mandate to reduce the size of this grassy weed patch and "refine" what was left into a carpet of fescue. Yes, the henbit, had to go, along with Venus looking glass and the Quaker-ladies all for the sake of turf.



I would do things differently now, but then I diligently read my horticulture books and carefully applied broadleaf herbicide to the lot. But something about the strawberries intrigued me and I decided to dig them up, saving them from that fate. I had never seen true wild strawberries before. I knew the false strawberries with their telltale yellow flowers and nasty tasting fruit, but these guys had white flowers and I knew they were different. I wanted to try an experiment. I would take the strawberries around back and plant them by the driveway where rainwater runoff from the paving was eroding the sandy, Coastal Plain soil. I did this and gave them free reign of the site. Not having to contend with lawnmowers proved helpful too and soon enough the plants were establishing themselves and spreading. That winter I was pleasantly surprised to see how the plants colored up taking on russet tones and maintaining their stronghold, held back the soil. The next summer came and went. I continued to identify plants in the yard and further afield; my copy of

(See Strawberries, page 7)

Beware of 'nursery grown' labels

In the March *Bulletin,* Ted Scott spelled out why gardeners who want to avoid wild-collected plants should be wary of white trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*) that is bargain-priced and labeled "nursery grown." Propagating this species is slow and therefore expensive; nursery-propagated plants are priced accordingly. Far from being the equivalent of "nursery-propagated," the ambiguous "nursery grown" label can be used to lend an air of legitimacy to plants dug from the wild.

The same warning applies to all native species that are difficult or time-consuming to propagate, including other *Trillium* species; *Erythronium* species; and most native orchids, including the popular lady-slippers, *Cypripedium*

(See Labels, page 10)

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- Fredericksburg chapter takes first trip p. 4
- Paintbrush & Shovel book review p. 5

From the President . . . . . .

Bio-diversity means life in our natural world

Have you had your "Ephemeral High 2001?" Two days along Bull Run's flood plain forest floor of bluebells, Claytonia, spicebush and clay earth have lifted my winter-weary spirit. Happily, the rest of the year across Virginia brings changing seasons that lure blossoms from our flora; each scheduled with its pollinators and then consumers of its fruits. The colorful prospectus of the *Flora of Virginia Project* states that only 12 of our 50 states have richer flora diversity than Virginia and all of those have a larger landmass.

Back home, spring's gentle showers produced my oriental-carpet yard. Against a background of spring green grass clumps are white violets (*Viola blanda*), purple violets (*V. pailionacea*), white dogwood bracts, under it are Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum biflorum)* in bud and the bloodroot petals are falling. An unruly plant increases the diversity in a negative way. Needle-leaf ivy, present when I moved here, is covering whatever is in its path -- revealing several years' neglect. Our VNPS mission is to conserve the native bio-diversity of Virginia's natural areas. We emphasize the flora of Virginia while others focus on the fauna. We all need to be concerned with healthy bio-diversity of natural area ecosystems.

Research conducted by Peter Reich of the University of Minnesota's Cedar Creek Natural History Areas, a 5,000-acre oak savanna near Minneapolis, is reported by William Souder to the *Washington Post* (4-16-01 on page A-7). The research team's field experiment placed the test site plants in a situation receiving carbon dioxide in their air and nitrogen fertilizer in their soil to create an environment similar to what researchers believe plants will be experiencing 50 years from now. They report "that no individual species dominates any of our plots and that different species combine to increase overall productivity. Plants in the most diverse groupings complement one another by using resources in different ways and at different times, and there are also 'positive species interactions' among different plants," Reich said. These could range from complex nutrient exchanges that are not yet well understood, to something as simple as taller plants that provide needed shade for shorter ones, he said.

Is bio-diversity important? It is essential. A healthy world needs choices offered by bio-diversity. Food, medicine, shelter, air and water quality and our spirits are sustained by bio-diversity. If one feels it unimportant, think of the same diet daily; of one species of plant in your garden; of everyone looking and thinking alike; of one medicine to cure all illness. Bio-diversity is life.

The strength of VNPS is in our diversity of members: individual personalities, professions, ages and regional interests. We agree on some things, but none of us agrees on everything. Some of our strengths are education, some research, some draw, some garden. Some are soft-spoken and others blunt. The thing that unifies our members is the need to protect Virginia's flora.

The slate of nominees for offices in VNPS and the invitation to our Annual Meeting in Winchester on June 1-3 are mailed. Your directors hope that you will enjoy the bio-diversity of the northwestern tip of Virginia and the time with diverse fellow members. Many new members will be at this VNPS meeting for the first time. Get to know each other on walks and the other events so bountifully planned by our Piedmont Chapter. VNPS benefits from diversity, just as nature does. Your uniqueness to our society is essential.

Your President, Nicky Staunton

Sign up for e-mail alert list on legislative issues

Are you interested in state or federal legislative and regulatory issues? Do you know of legislative issues that you think should be brought to the attention of interested VNPS members? Would you like to be notified of when and how to influence your elected officials on such issues?

Many of you indicated such an interest on the membership form when you joined VNPS; but many long-time members have not had an opportunity to express such an interest. Therefore, we plan to offer a new e-mail service to provide current information on legislative issues affecting native plants. Because we don't want to fill up the e-mailboxes of all members, we will set up a separate list for those who specify that they want to be included in this forum. We will not give the addresses to any other organization.

If you would like to be included on such a list, please send an e-mail to malawler@aol.com and ask that your name and e-mail address be placed on the "VNPS Legis. List."

Relating the protection of streams and riparian areas to the Chesapeake Bay Act

Planning for

Habitat Conservation

Editor's Note - This article marks the beginning of a five-part series by VNPS Conservation Chair Jessica Strother on the various ways to ensure and plan for habitat conservation. The series is intended to provide examples of successful and helpful ways taxpayers and professionals can purposefully plan for habitat conservation and bio-diversity. The information provided is only an overview of the issues.

Some of you might ask why would the Chesapeake Bay Act be an important tool to use for habitat conservation? In the early 1990s the Virginia General Assembly adopted the Bay Act enabling legislation to improve and restore water quality to the Bay. Half of Virginia lies within the Bay watershed.

An important element of the Bay Act requires the preservation of buffer areas referred to by some as Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) along rivers, larger perennial streams, and some wetlands. The RPAs are typically forested or may contain other types of vegetation such as emergent wetland vegetation common along tidal portions of rivers or creeks. These buffers serve as important filters to cleanse water run-off of pollutants and sediment, but they also provide important habitat for a wide variety of native plant species.

Most of us are familiar with some of the more common riparian species such as skunk cabbage, Jack-in-the-pulpit, Virginia bluebell, trout lily, sweet gum, sycamore, river birch and brookside alder. There are many more species to be found in these areas, and some that are less common or rare. In Fairfax County along the bluffs of Great Falls is a globally rare natural community with several species of rare plants. In Stafford County, participants on a recent VNPS field trip to Crow's Nest marveled at a small colony of the uncommon *equisetum pratense* growing in a boggy area next to a tidal creek. Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) which improves water quality in and of itself, also benefits from the filtering effects of forested buffers in that there is more oxygen and light in the water, thus improving SAV's ability to thrive. Wild celery (*Vallisneria*) and numerous species of pond weed (*Potamogeton*) are typically found in healthier streams and rivers in the state.

The following tips and suggestions may be helpful to you in any efforts you may undertake in advocating and creating awareness in your community:

•Determine if your jurisdiction, where applicable, has adopted the Chesapeake Bay Act into its own county/city code. Some jurisdictions have yet to do so. A new environmental initiative agreed to by the Bay signatories (Md., Va., Del., and Pa.), called the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement, will require considerably more stringent water quality and habitat protection measures to be implemented at the local level by the year 2010. If you live outside the Bay watershed, find out what your community is doing to protect the rivers and streams and the buffers along them. Find out if your jurisdiction addresses these issues in its comprehensive plan.

•Not all perennial streams are protected in the state of Virginia due to a complex set of regulatory issues. The opportunity to work with locally elected officials, engineering and planning staff to protect these streams and the important riparian habitat along them is currently being pursued by a number of jurisdictions statewide.

•Work with local landowners to encourage them to protect and conserve the buffers along the streams, wetlands and rivers that are part of their property. Many landowners are just misinformed or lack the knowledge about the benefits forested buffers provide.

The state Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department, based in Richmond, is available to provide assistance to landowners and those with questions regarding the above information.

In 1996 Virginia committed, through the Virginia Riparian Buffer Initiative, to reforesting 610 miles of riparian forest buffers by the year 2010. This initiative is part of a larger effort that calls for the Bay signatories to collectively restore 2,010 miles of buffers by the year 2010. Numerous community and environmental organizations have begun to plant wetland and riparian seedlings, whips and shrubs into these buffers in the last few years.

•If your VNPS chapter or other community group believes a buffer area is in need of re-forestation, your local Soil·and Water Conservation District office, the local National Resource Conservation Service or the Virginia Department of Forestry can assist you in obtaining and organizing a "re-leaf effort." Wherever possible, use locally/regionally grown plant material that is native to the specific area to be re-planted.

Jessie Strother, VNPS Conservation Chair

New chapter explores spring flora on first outing

Editor's note: Meet our Fredericksburg members on their first field trip - their petition will come to us at the annual meeting. Meanwhile, enjoy reading about their walk as told by Paul Sullivan, a freelance columnist who lives in Spotsylvania County and writes "Armchair Adventures" for the *Free Lance-Star*.

Springtime woods hold hidden gems
The woods hold wonderful surprises
for those who take time to look.

Twice in the past several weeks, I have gone along to events of a new organization in town and have been encouraged with what I have seen. The Fredericksburg chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society is said to be the first new chapter of this state group in a decade.

Fifty-five people attended the chapter's first regular meeting. More surprising, to me, considering the weather, were the 15 people who turned out last Sunday for the group's first outing.

I am not, incidentally, a member of VNPS, chiefly because I just don't join much of anything. Hal Wiggins and Joella Killian, both working biologists, were leaders for the outing—a springtime wildflower walk along the Mabes Trail, following the Rappahannock River on the city side, below the Embrey Dam. I spoke with Wiggins the day before, and we agreed that with spring running late, plus continued cool, rainy weather in the forecast, we probably wouldn't see much.

--Sometimes it's nice to be mistaken.--

A cordial and diverse group—many apparently strangers beforehand—gathered at Bill Micks' Rappahannock Outdoor Education Center off Fall Hill Avenue for the walk. It was an informal outing, as these things have to be if they are to work out. People soon drifted into smaller groupings to peek and paw through leaves and undergrowth for things showing signs of spring.

The key words here are, "peek and paw," for with so many eyes to hunt, and determination to find, I believe everyone was surprised just what nature can hide so well before the weather warms to the season. The woodlands are like that in this area: always full of things you don't think are there, if you will only take the trouble to look. A few things were obvious, like the budding red maples, the green buds on the spicebush and the tangled smilax or common greenbrier.

But the real gems were, for the most part, things you had to look for. I found shoots of the Mayapple sticking up through the rich, moist soil like green thumbs. The pretty little Dutchman's breeches were sprinkled here and about, together with the cut-leafed toothwort and the now-fading spring beauty—the latter one of the earliest wildflowers to bloom.

I had imagined it would be far too early to see one of my favorites, the trout lily, yet a few of these pretty drooping yellow flowers had begun to emerge and several were already in full bloom. As we worked our way slowly upstream, a rain-swollen Rappahannock River—just a few feet away—made quite a roar. Although the ground was muddy, each new flowering plant presented me with an opportunity for close-up pictures. Photographing wildflowers is challenging and a lot of fun, even if you do get muddy sometimes.

Off the path to one side, I found a clump of beautiful white flowers but had no idea what they were. Wiggins identified them as bloodroot, named for their deep red roots. With so few of them, we resisted the chance to get a look at the roots.

Wiggins brought along copies of a plant list he made up for this tract, the Franklin property, more popularly known as the Mabes Trail. The list is a starting point, he said, and certainly not a complete inventory. As if to prove that point, someone took notice of a single flowering plant with a yellow, violet-like blossom. No one knew for certain just what it was; several began flipping through the pages of wildflower field guides, seeking an answer. The attractive little wildflower turned out to be a marsh-marigold, something new to add to the plant list for the riverside nature tract, courtesy of Cathy Jett.

A number of plants found have distinctive odors. I'd never been acquainted with the rounded leaves of a small, low-growing plant called mustard-garlic. But when I asked Killian about it, she twisted a leaf, handed it to me and—wow—a strong smell of garlic and mustard.

Caltha palustris, marsh-marigold
Illustration by Barbara Stewart

I have been roaming Virginia's woodlands for more decades than I want to know, and there has never been a single time I have not gone home knowing something new. Wiggins passed around other leaves and roots with strong scents—spicebush, sassafras and wild onion.

Whether or not anyone kept an accurate species count, I am not sure. When we had done, I estimated we had seen about two dozen wild plants, many of those already in bloom.

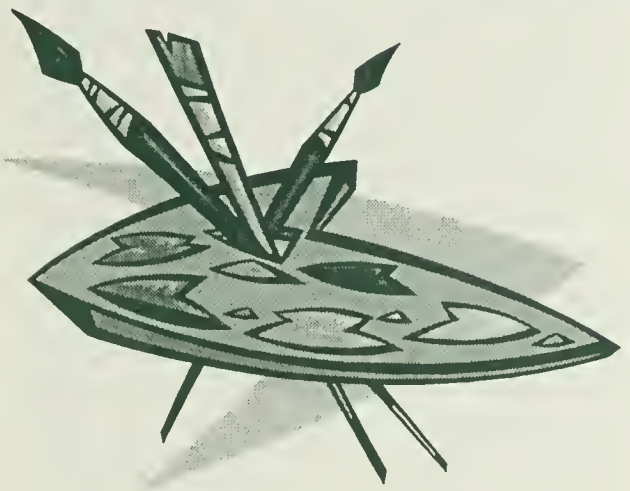
"We should come back here and do this in another two or three weeks," said Wiggins, "there would be many new things to see." Not a bad first-outing at all for a brand-new organization. And then someone who just happened to have a freshly-made chocolate cake in her car suggested we all gather around for a slice.

The perfect ending to an afternoon whose prospects had seemed so dismal at the outset.

With Paintbrush and Shovel

Native plants, art, history come together in book

***With Paintbrush and Shovel: Preserving Virginia's Wildflowers*; written by Nancy Kober with Donna M. E. Ware, Botanical Consultant; watercolors by Bessie Niemeyer Marshall; published by The University Press of Virginia in 2000 for the Petersburg Garden Club; ISBN 0-8139-1969-x; $42.95, retail price in hardcover.**



Virginians are fortunate to have authors like Nancy Kober who masterfully preserve in print our treasures – historic, artistic and scientific. In her new book, *With Paintbrush and Shovel: Preserving Virginia's Wildflowers*, Kober tells the story of the Lee Park Wildflower and Bird Sanctuary in Petersburg, Virginia, and the herbarium and watercolors collection created in the 1930s and 1940s. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) project to provide employment to women heads of households in the 1930s was not simply a park development project, but an inspiring effort in education, documentation and preservation supported by the Petersburg Garden Club and other community organizations.

Under the direction of Mary (Donald) Claiborne Holden, a city park was developed and planted as a preserve for wildflowers, trees and shrubs of the region. She envisioned that citizens, students, gardeners and the workers themselves could learn more about the various plants if they could study their distinguishing features. Recognizing the difficulty people have identifying and classifying plants, she preserved 295 species in an herbarium collection and commissioned her neighbor and friend, Bessie Niemeyer Marshall, to create watercolor illustrations of these specimens. A major portion of the herbarium collection is represented in 238 paintings that accompany the herbarium. These exquisite paintings are recorded in this book.

The book is organized into two sections, Part I: The Story of the Lee Park Herbarium Collection and Part II: The Watercolors of the Lee Park Herbarium Collection. In part I, Kober deftly documents the history of the project, offering us glimpses of the lives, personalities and dreams of Donald Holden and Bessie Niemeyer as derived from oral histories and written records. She does not shy away from describing the impact of the project on the poor women who performed the backbreaking labor to plant over 30,000 plants in the sanctuary or the more recent disappointment of residents and garden club members who see this effort eroding away due to poor park maintenance and changing priorities, largely economic development, over the past 30 years.

At the same time, Kober conveys the importance of the botanical riches of the area, which has long been viewed by botanists, including the eminent botanist, Dr. Fernald from Harvard University, as a region rich in rare and unusual flora such as the small whorled pogonia, *Isotria medeoloides*; spreading pogonia, *Cleistes divaricata*; and white fringed orchis, *Plantanthera blephariglottis*. The herbarium records from the sanctuary are even more important to us now as the Flora of Virginia Project currently underway documents our existing botanical riches.

Admirers of botanical illustration will appreciate the skill and talent of Marshall as they admire the watercolors in this book. The strength of the book as an educational tool lies in the organization of the illustrations by habitat in the Lee Park Sanctuary, open upland, forested upland, open bottomland and forested bottomland. Also included in the book are lists of species in the herbarium not represented by watercolors, and an alphabetical index including common and scientific names of the plants illustrated.

Native plant enthusiasts, artists and history buffs alike, will enjoy an evening or two reading *With Paintbrush and Shovel*. It wouldn't surprise me if these readers come back to the book time and again to learn more about and to reinforce their knowledge of Virginia's native plants and their habitats or to be inspired for their own local preservation efforts.

This book will be available in the library at Blandy after it is catalogued. Look for it in the botany section, QK98 .M327 2000.

Mary E. Olien
Assistant Curator for Education at Blandy

Look at wild things with fresh eyes

In this long-distance, electronic world we live in, people tend to turn a blind eye to the immediate wonders under our feet and above our heads. The moon-yellow sky of a snowstorm in the city is seen only by those who roll their eyes and sigh at such an inconvenience. But to that same city dweller, a snow storm at the ski lodge on Christmas eve is idyllic. The place we inhabit on a daily basis is never as beautiful as the beautiful places we dream of escaping to.

While working at a botanical garden in Virginia, I spent many hours pulling lemonweed (*Oxalis* spp), chickweed (*Stellaria* spp), and pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana)* from the flower beds. To what degree do our aesthetic opinions rely on the 'weed' half of these common names? On the leaf mould piles where we dump our debris, grow several precariously perched vase-shaped shrubs of pokeweed. Their stems hang heavy with dangling beads of black berries. The berries' juices, and the plants' stems are a shade of magenta a plant breeder might die for had he not plucked the seedlings out of his prized canna lily beds earlier in the summer. Often I imagine how pleasant a clump of oxalis might look had we treated it the way we treat the exotics we purposefully propagate. The dizzy heart-shaped leaves, the tiny yellow flowers, and the spikes of red-seeded pods send gardeners weeding with more fury than a swarm of surprised yellow jackets. It is interesting that we humans pluck out, or ignore one of the most prolific, independent species of our native and naturalized flora. Indeed, *oxalis* is the squirrel of the botanical world.

Hicham, a Moroccan friend of mine, regards squirrels with an intense fascination; there are no squirrels in Morocco. Squirrels! Those lowly rats of the tree that steal bird seed and eat trash. I am envious though; I want always to see things with such unbiased eyes.

I discovered the excitement of wild plant identification in college. I went to school in what I initially thought were the bleak wastelands of Ohio. Never have I been so wrong. Soon, I was led to a spot nestled along the banks of the Vermilion River where the most spectacular displays of wild flora continue to delight students. In spring, around the second week of April, there is a spot along the Vermilion that bursts into color. The bright pink and blue Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) are interspersed with white trillium and the fresh smooth foliage of wild leek. It is a beauty which in my mind remains unmatched.

The day I was led to that hidden burst of color along the river I was filled with both the desire to show the whole world this splendor, and the desire to keep it safe from curious feet and impulsive bouquets. What a strange sense of possession I felt for something that I did not discover and was so obviously not my own. But you cannot own a wild thing, and wildness is simultaneously a wildflower's most alluring and frustrating quality. You cannot choose where you will come upon a *Lobelia siphilitica* in the woods, but the rush the discovery gives you can become an addiction.

Finally, you cannot trust a wild thing. Even if you rescue a ginseng from a bulldozer or a foot path, there is no guarantee it will survive. A wild thing owes you nothing, and yet somehow you feel you owe it an existence.

My cousin made friends with a young squirrel that lived in her back yard. Every night she would feed him peanuts on her back porch. The squirrel became tame enough to touch. One evening, maybe she made a move that was too sharp, maybe the squirrel found the peanuts stale, or maybe he just decided her finger smelled better--the squirrel which ate out of her hands gave her a nasty little bite and ran away, never to return. Her only reward was a trip to the doctor to get rabies shots. My cousin lamented the bite for a day, but she mourned the loss of a pet for a week, keeping the peanut jar by the backdoor just in case. Human attachment runs thicker than blood.

There is an old Episcopalian school saying, "What we keep we lose, and only what we give remains our own." Pluck a trillium and its tender head will bow in a day, give it space and time to reproduce and a colony will flourish. How do we safeguard these flowers that clearly are not ours to protect? Two Aprils later, I brought a friend to that same spot along the river. We walked along the narrow path that flanks the river in complete silence. The bluebells and the trillium were covered with spots of sun that filtered through the very beginnings of a canopy. There was no reason to speak; the vegetation that brushed against our knees was conversation beyond any predictable gushing we were apt to partake in. When we got back to the car my friend asked for directions, and I drew him a map. I wish I could draw a map for everyone.

Amy McIntire
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Council of Native American Elders Established

A Council of Native American elders nominated by the Ethnobotany Committee of the Plant Conservation Alliance Medicinal Plants Working Group met in Arlington recently, fulfilling a long-term goal. The group chose a chair, elected a board, and agreed on a mission. It also outlined an initial set of action items to achieve. Members include representatives from the Navajo, Mohawk, Yurok, Catabwa, Cherokee, Kumeyaay and Accohanock tribes. Among the tasks they identified is the development of a list of plants of cultural significance and conservation concern to tribes, by habitat and region. The elders have also endorsed the industry symposium proposed and sponsored by Aveda and other members of the health care products industry, who are also PCA-MPWG members. This group of elders will actively participate in planning for that event, scheduled for this fall.

•Strawberries

(Continued from page 1)

Newcomb's was getting worn and had lots of little pressed specimens in between the pages. The strawberries were spreading and I was pleased that they were developing into a very nice native groundcover.

Then this past summer, much by chance, I happened to look down and saw the fruit. At first it was just one or two spots of red, but as I looked closer I saw that my groundcover was full of tiny red berries! I had gotten used to the strawberry plant groundcover and had, in a sense, ceased to see it anymore. It was a nice mass of green holding back the soil and was a spot of the yard that didn't have to be mown. This was to be my first taste of wild strawberries and excitedly I went just inside the kitchen door and grabbed a container to collect the fruit. Before long I had a nice bowl full and that evening went to the supermarket to buy my favorite vanilla ice cream to accompany them.

Wanting to share my discovery, the next day I took some to my parents' house in Richmond, where, retired now, they lived in the Glen Allen area. I set the bowl on the counter and didn't say anything. My mother looked over and asked, "What are those?" I remained silent. "Are they what I think they are?" This time I answered, "If you think they are wild strawberries then you'd be right." "Where did you get them?" quickly followed, "I haven't seen them since I was a girl!" My mother grew up on a farm in Amherst County in the1940s, very different from my childhood in suburban Washington. She would take us back to the area from time to time though the farm had long since been sold. Then the stories started, "You know, I used to collect these as a girl," she said, "Granny used to make me go out and gather them so that she could make preserves." She paused, "One time she told me to gather them and when I got to the strawberry patch, there was a snake in the middle of them." She paused again. "You know I hated to lie, but when I got back, I told Granny there weren't any strawberries this time..." My groundcover experiment had provided me with much more than fruit; it gave me a link to my past. It was a link across generations to a time when we lived closer to nature, a time when nature was still wild. Maybe I'll find a snake in my strawberries one day. One can only hope.

Michael Andrew Sawyer
John Clayton Chapter President

Fragaria virginiana widely distributed

Fragaria virginiana, our wild strawberry, also known as the scarlet or Virginia strawberry, is widely distributed in North America and is not to be confused with *Duchesnea indica*, the Indian strawberry. *Duchesnea indica* may at first glance resemble *F. virginiana* but has yellow flowers and fruit with raised seeds or achenes. The fruit of the Indian strawberry is not palatable. True Virginia strawberry has achenes that are sunken deeply into pits in the fruit. In its wide distribution *F. virginiana* has many varieties including var. *australis*, var. *illinoensis*, var. *canadensis*, and var. *terrae-novae*. Modern strawberries are the result of hybridization between *F. virginiana* and the South American, *F. chiloensis*. Qualities of heat / cold tolerance and flavor found in *F. virginiana* were combined with the larger but less hardy *F. chiloensis*. These modern varieties of strawberry have since intermingled with native populations to the point that it is now possible to find strawberries in the wild with larger leaves and fruit, traits of its South American cousin.

Wildflower Calendar

Native Plant Conference – June 7-9, Millersville University, Millersville, Pa. Call 717-872-3030 for a brochure.

Coastal Zone 2001: Hands Across the Water-Linking Land, Lake and Sea – July 15-19, Cleveland. For information (843-740-1279 or Jan.Kucklock@noaa.gov).

Landscaping With Native Plants Conference - July 25-28, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, North Carolina, Call 1-800-WCU-4-YOU for a brochure.

Native Plant Seminar and Sales - Saturday, August 25, Irvine Natural Science Center, Stevenson, Md. For information (410-484-2413 or explorenature.org).

Open Nursery Day to Benefit The Flora of Virginia Project – September 16, Virginia Natives Nursery, Hume, Va.

Medicinal & aromatic plants conference slated

This industry-sponsored symposium will provide background on why it is important for medicinal and aromatic plant companies to develop policies and action plans to conserve these species in trade. Included will be success stories and break-throughs in the conservation and cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants. Workshops will offer opportunities to learn and contribute on topics that include: how to locate data on the conservation status of plants in trade; cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants; wildcrafting; and more. Although plants in global trade will be covered, the focus will be the state of the U.S. medicinal plant market. Also, the symposium will include Native American perspectives on

(See Conference, page 10)

From Near and Far

VNPS and Blandy to co-sponsor seminar series speaker

Adrienne L. Edwards of the Center for Biodiversity, Champaign, Illinois, has been selected by Dr. Dave Carr, Curator of Blandy, to speak on, "Vegetation classification, population biology, and management of rare plants in isolated depression wetlands." The Summer Seminar Series program will be on Monday, July 2 in the Blandy Library. A potluck meal will follow the talk. More information and directions to the State Arboretum of Virginia's Blandy Experimental Farm are available on: www.virginia.edu/~blandy or it can be accessed by linking from www.vnps.org.

Edwards has published "Population Biology and Management of Rare Plants in Depression Wetlands of the Southeastern Coastal Plain, USA" in the *Natural Areas Journal* Volume 21 (1) 2001. The depression wetlands about which she will speak are known as Carolina bays, limesinks, and other landscape depressions, or isolated seasonally ponded wetlands. An evening at Blandy in the summer contains many pleasures. If you have not yet visited the arboretum, arrive early enough to do a walk-about. To reach the Blandy office by phone, call 540-837-1758.

Weed control handbook available for downloading at no charge

The Nature Conservancy's Wildland Invasive Species Program is delighted to announce the on-line publication of the *Weed Control Methods Handbook*. This 200-page handbook is what every natural areas manager should know about weed control methods. It consists of seven chapters and six appendices, a review manual, grazing, fire, biocontrol and herbicide techniques. There are even in-depth discussions of 11 different herbicides, plus a great deal of supporting information on herbicide use. This meaty manual (but good even for vegetarians) is available, free for download at http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu.

New D.C. flora images added to Washington area website

Over 400 flower images were recently added to the website: "The Flora of the Washington-Baltimore Area" (http://www.nmnh.si.edu/botany/projects/dcflora/), a site co-authored by Sylvia Stone-Orli with Dr. Stan Shetler. In the site's flower gallery (http://persoon.si.edu/DCGallery/flowgal.cfm),you can search for and identify spring flowers you have seen in the D.C. area. Please take a look and enjoy the images!

VNPS web page sports a new look and new information

The web page of the Virginia Native Plant Society, www.vnps.org, has a beautiful new look and now contains both a page for The Flora of Virginia Project and the list of invasive alien plants established by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation with VNPS as a partner in its production. Sylvia Stone-Orli has also added a slide show on the website for the VNPS Wildflower of the Year. There are chapter newsletters, events, hikes, a nursery source list, and many more interesting bits of information. There is a list of links not only to related organizations, but a separate list with links to other native plant societies. We want to express our appreciation to Sylvia and to Stan Shetler for this website that is our VNPS ambassador to the world.

Flora of Virginia Project continues to move forward

If you want to identify a plant in Virginia and it is not in *Peterson* or *Newcomb*, you will have to carry a 100-pound library on your back in the field to be certain of keying the plant correctly. All surrounding states have their own "Flora" and Virginia alone is without one. How can it be that the state that served as the portal for the earliest botanists is alone without a book of its high flora diversity? Whatever the reasons, we who have been using the books from Maryland, West Virginia, North Carolina, the Northeastern United States and Canada are now ready to publish our own. The Virginia Native Plant Society board of directors is unanimously in support of the project. From our first days, a "Flora" has been a goal and now the time has come to begin the work. The Flora of Virginia Project is rapidly moving toward establishing its status as a tax-exempt organization and that will enable it to receive financial support. Information on how to support the project will be shared as soon as it is available. Meanwhile, Christopher J. Ludwig, Joslin Gallatin, Marion Lobstein and Alan Weakley have produced a beautiful booklet describing the project, its needs, schedule and other information. Their information is also available on the VNPS website: www.vnps.org. You can reach Chris Ludwig at www.dcr.state.va.us/dnh/vaflora.htm for more information about the project or for a copy of the booklet that is a prospectus for The Flora of Virginia Project. With a projected publication date of December 31, 2007, information will be given to you between now and that date on the progress of the "Flora" and we will have opportunities to help produce this historic and greatly-needed book.

Beetles enlisted to help in fight against the purple plague

Editor's note: This article is about *Galerucella calmariensis*, the chrysomelid beetle, being used to control purple loosestrife. It appeared recently in the *Chicago Tribune*. The author is Denys Bucksten.

The first time Brian Hamming saw a marsh awash in purple loosestrife—often called the purple plague—he thought the members of the Environmental Club at Lake Forest High School would be digging the plant out by hand to curtail it.

Hamming, a junior, soon realized that digging up the plants wouldn't get rid of them. A single loosestrife plant can be 10-feet tall and generate several million seeds, which spread easily. So the club, which is participating in a state project with other schools to try to bring purple loosestrife under control, has adopted an unusual ally: *Galerucella calmariensis*, a species of beetle with a voracious appetite for purple loosestrife.

Hamming and other club members are raising the beetles at the school for release this spring.

Europeans brought loosestrife to the United States in the early 1800s. The plant—which chokes out native vegetation, has no natural enemies and is resistant to disease—has damaged wetlands throughout North America. Herbicides are costly, and loosestrife spreads too rapidly to be mowed, burned or flooded out of existence.

In 1994, Illinois officials decided to use biological controls and unleash the beetle, which also is native to Europe. The Illinois Historical Survey in Champaign, a state research and regulatory agency for ecology issues, has recruited students to help release the beetles, which die out once their sole food source is gone.

"I was shocked to learn about the beetle," Hamming said. "Here we have a plant originating in Europe and the solution is to bring over more organisms from Europe to wipe it out."

The Illinois Historical Survey gave adult beetles to several area schools. At Lake Forest High School, the Environmental Club received about 50 adult beetles in early April, along with half a dozen purple loosestrife plants, from the Lake Forest Open Lands Association, a wetlands preservation group. Hamming set the plants in a science room at the school, enclosing the 48-inch plants in tomato cages covered with netting and bathing them in fluorescent light. The idea is to fool the beetles into thinking it's already late spring to make them lay eggs early. By the end of May or early June, hundreds of new, adult beetles are expected to fill the netting tubes and be ready for release into field cages at a marshy area in Lake Forest. There, in a monitored site overrun with loosestrife, the beetles are expected to do what they do best: devour the purple plant.

Students have been working with state scientists and non-profit environmental agencies since 1998 to raise beetles, battle loosestrife and develop related school curricula. Since 1995, the program has resulted in the release of more than 2 million beetles into marshy areas, said Robert Wiedenmann, director of entomology at the Natural History Survey.

Jim Sullivan, head of the Lake Forest High School science department and faculty adviser to the club, said its involvement in the project could ultimately make "the Lake Forest community a model to follow for other communities with wetlands and a purple loosestrife problem."

See the address label for your membership expiration date

VNPS Membership/Renewal Form

Name(s)_____

Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

___Individual $20

___Family $30 ___Student $15

___Patron $50 ___Associate (groups) $40*

___Sustaining $100 ___Life $500

*Please designate one person as delegate for Associate membership

To give a gift membership or join additional chapters: Enclose dues, name, address, and chapter (non-voting memberships in any other than your primary chapter are $5)

I wish to make an additional contribution to ___VNPS or_____Chapter in the amount of ___$10___$25___$50___$100___$(Other)_____

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Make check payable to VNPS and mail to:

VNPS Membership Chair, Blandy Experimental Farm, 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2, Boyce, VA 22620

Membership dues are tax deductible in the amount they exceed $5. Contributions are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

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The deadline for the next issue is July 1

Send your native plant gardening success stories to LBJWC

The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas needs the help of native plant gardeners. The Wildflower Center is dedicated to educating people about the environmental necessity, economic value and natural beauty of native plants. One of the most popular exhibits in the visitor's gallery is a book of pictures that exhibits native landscape success stories from across North America. The photographs depict native landscapes ranging from corporation headquarters framed by wildflower meadows, to vibrant patches of butterfly infested black-eyed Susans in a family's backyard.

This is where your landscape comes in! It is time for the center to update the book. Using the world wide web, the center is creating an online gallery where people come together to share their love, appreciation, and stories of native plants, as well as some more technical information about cultivation and maintenance.

Because pictures are worth a thousand words, the staff is asking you to send them your personal native landscape slides and photos. The photos can be on as grand or as small a scheme as you desire. They need to see native plants, but are also looking for pictures that include an entire habitat. Birds, butterflies, bees and babies are all part of the ecosystems we inhabit. It is the center's hope that the photos will illustrate its mission by displaying thriving examples from across the continent.

The staff would like responses to the following question: How has landscaping with native plants added to beauty and cut cost and maintenance in the area you maintain? Please return your native plant landscaping information with your mailing address and/or e-mail address with your photograph(s) to ogren@wildflower.org; fax to: (512)292-4627; or mail to 4801 La Crosse Avenue, Austin, TX 78722.

•Conference

(Continued from page 7)

sustainability. A forum to discuss industry action to preserve medicinal and aromatic plant biodiversity around the world will also be a component.

The goal of the symposium is to make this the first of many such meetings led by the industry to discuss and, hopefully, resolve issues of conservation concern. For more information, e-mail julie_lyke@fws.gov.

•Labels

(Continued from page 1)

species. Large plants of species that are even moderately slow to develop, such as some native ferns, should also give one pause.

A case in point: This spring a large chain of home improvement stores has been selling packaged roots of more than 20 native species. In addition to *Trillium grandiflorum* and another trillium identified only as "assorted colors," they include pink lady-slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*), trout lily or dog-tooth violet, (*Erythronium americanum*), and fairly good-sized rootstocks of five ferns. They're labeled "nursery grown" and are $1.99 each. Were they propagated by a nursery from seed or by division? Or were they wild collected? Do you buy them?

Mary Pockman, Powtowmack Chapter

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Bulletin

A publication of the VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Conserving wild flowers and wild places

Annual Meeting a blast thanks to Piedmont Chapter

What a blast! That's how we describe our most enjoyable weekend of June 1-3 spent with our fellow native plant people. Our thanks go to the Piedmont Chapter and those at Blandy who worked so hard to plan, provide and carry out the enticing variety of fieldtrips and speakers for our edification and enjoyment.

We learned from Jim Gilbert what phenology is and why we care about it, and that, without realizing it, most of us make phenological observations because of our interest in nature. According to Jim, phenology is the science that studies the timing of natural events from year to year and place to place and the relationships of those events to weather and climate. Students of nature who keep records to help find order and meaning are called phenologists. What we found most exciting is Jim's ability to reach children through phenology and help them become better stewards as they learn about cause and effect in the environment.

(See Annual Meeting, page 10)

Fredericksburg Chapter is official!

At its June meeting, the VNPS Board of Directors welcomed Anita Tuttle, president; Ann Gorrell, steering committee; and Hal Wiggins, board representative-elect as the first officers of the new Fredericksburg Chapter. They brought 56 signatures on their petition for VNPS affiliation. The new chapter covers five areas: Stafford, Spotsylvania, Caroline, King George and the city of Fredericksburg. Ferry Farm, the childhood home of George Washington, will be the meeting location. The chapter has already conducted several field trips, held a workday to remove invasive alien plants, worked to support Crow's Nest acquisition by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, created an education program and is sponsoring a city native plant site.

On behalf of the members of VNPS, a gift of $150 was presented to assist in start-up costs. For more information call Ann Gorrell, 540-972-7613, anngorrell@cs.com; or Anita Tuttle 540-775-4188, amtuttle@mindspring.com.

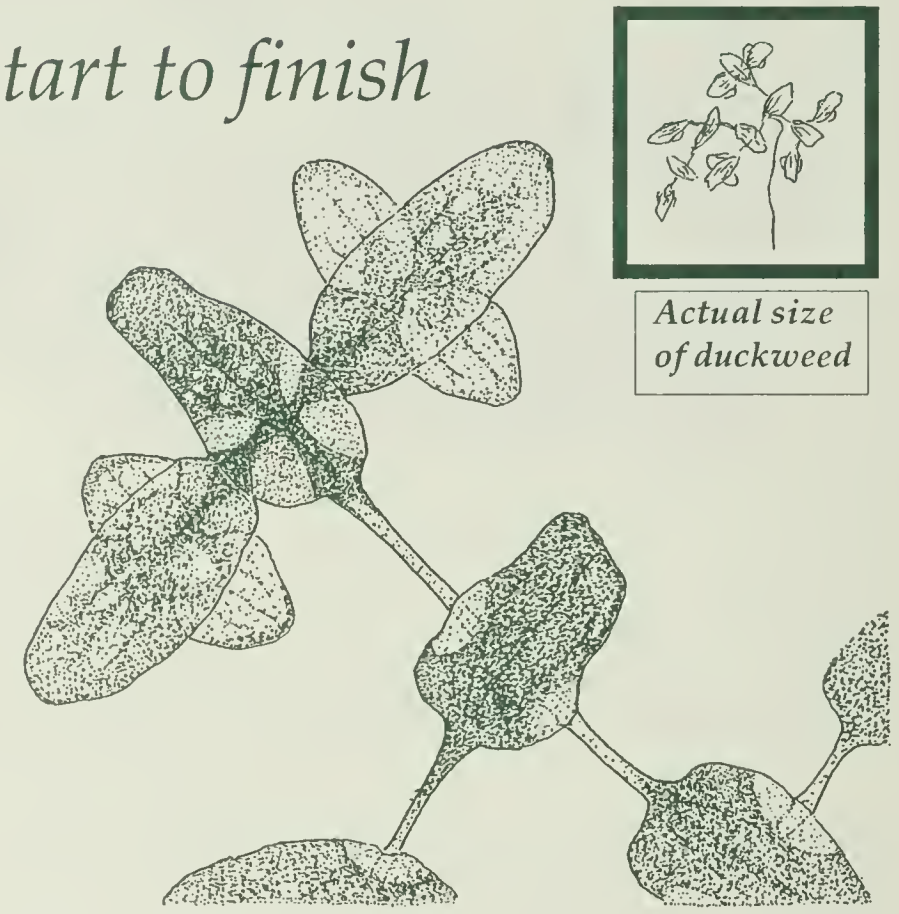
Ice Mountain, West Virginia
Linnaea borealis, *twinflower*
Illustration by Nicky Staunton

From the President . . . . . .

Annual Meeting a joy from start to finish

When you read this *Bulletin* much of summer will be behind you. The VNPS Annual Meeting hosted by our Piedmont Chapter during the first weekend in June might be fading a bit in the memory of those who attended, but probably not much. The weekend was well-planned, with exciting fieldtrips, and inspiring with phenologist Jim Gilbert from Minnesota and George Fenwick of the American Bird Conservancy alerting us to needed conservation efforts for birds and habitats. Chris Ludwig, DCR-NHP, Marion Lobstein and Joslin Gallatin presented information about the Flora of Virginia Project. The Virginia Birding Trail information was brought to us by Becky Wajda of Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Sincere appreciation goes to Piedmont President Jody Lyon and her husband, Bob; Karen York (who helped with the entire event from beginning to end), Bruce Jones, Mary Olien, Adrienne Garreau, Gina Yurkonis (who did the beautiful table flower arrangements), Sally Anderson, Phil Dailey, Mary Painter, Duane Tant, Jocelyn Sladen, Kim Strader and Effie Fox. In addition, we would like to thank Ellie Leonard and her daughter's catering company for the lunches; fieldtrip leaders Kristen Zimet, Marion Lobstein, Bob Lyon, Joe Coleman, Stan Shetler, Carrie Blair; workshop leaders Dave Carr, BEF; Patty Moore, DGIF; Mike Liskey, USDA; Calvin Ernst, Ernst Conservation Seeds for the Meadow Workshop; Jessie Harris, Photography; Kathleen Maier, Dreamtime Herbals; and to Craig Tufts and Ann Little who gave us the Landscaping for Birds and Bluebird workshops. The team deserves many accolades for the planning of the entire weekend and for having it run so smoothly. Thanks are also needed for all of the chapters that donated collections for our silent auction and to the members who contributed gifts for the collections. You were all generous and the funds raised by the auction will be very useful to the society. Thanks, also, to the 12 members who purchased the collections. The bidding competition involved many at the evening events.



Actual size of duckweed

Star duckweed at Abram's Creek-White's Pond
Greatly magnified *Lemna trisulca*
Illustration by Nicky Staunton

The next annual meeting will be hosted by the Pocahontas Chapter in the Richmond area. The date is returning to September, the second weekend, for 2002. Make a note on your calendar now to be with us September 13, 14 and 15 of 2002.

Your President, Nicky Staunton

Notes from the Board

June 1, 2001 at Blandy Library, Boyce, Virginia

Following the call to order by the president, minutes of the March 2001 meeting of the board were accepted, as was the treasurer's report. It was noted that with a combination of office expenses and lack of anticipated growth in membership, the society is carrying a deficit. The board will address this in the coming months. Ancel Hendrix, CPA, has completed the review of the 1998 and 1999 treasurer's records and filed necessary tax reports. He is currently auditing the books for 2000. Coupled with this work, he is recommending some standard procedures for our future record keeping.

Anita Tuttle, Ann Gorrell and Hal Wiggins of the newly formed Fredericksburg Area Chapter of VNPS attended the meeting to present the chapter's petition (with 56 signatures) for affiliation as a chapter of our Society. The chapter also presented a copy of its bylaws and logo signature native plant, the bay magnolia. Upon motion to accept the petition and its second, the board voted unanimously to approve the petition thereby establishing the Fredericksburg Area Chapter (FAC) an official member of VNPS. On behalf of the membership of VNPS, Nicky Staunton presented a check to the new chapter for $150. Wiggins will be the official representative for FAC to the board of directors.

Chris Ludwig, project director and co-author for the *Flora of Virginia* was present to share information about the

(See From the Board, page 5)

Land development and conservation tools for Virginia

***Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Planning Ordinances*, Randall Arendt, (Natural Lands Trust), 1999, $42.50.**

Growing Greener is an illustrated guidebook and collaborative effort undertaken by the Natural Lands Trust, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Pennsylvania State University Cooperative Extension. In this book the author proposes strategies for shaping growth that focus on your community's unique natural and historical resources. Readers will gain helpful insights into determining what their community does and does not have in the way of a *conservation oriented* comprehensive plan, subdivision and site plan ordinance, and zoning ordinance. Specific elements such as dealing with on-the-ground design issues, density concerns, maps and overlay districts, as well as diagnostic questions for community leaders are included.

One of the chapters delves into evaluating wetlands, soils, forest cover and vegetation patterns, and topography to name a few, as part of a ranking system of site features for conservation priority. Arendt's book also includes 11 case studies of actual conservation oriented developments in nine states, one known as Farmcolony in Greene County, near Stanardsville, Virginia.

A series of quotes from planner-environmentalists that range from 1909 to 1998 are included in the beginning of the book. One of the quotes by Alex Wilson, from *Green Development*, 1998: " The idea of using development as an engine to protect open space, strengthen communities, reduce automobile use and even restore damaged ecosystems is an exciting one.... It will require a paradigm shift to move society from 'thinking the best it can do is to minimize negative impact, toward a view in which development is seen as both contributing to the growth of healthy human communities, while simultaneously restoring (not merely sustaining) the natural environment.'"

Growing Greener is 236 pages and is published by Island Press, 1718 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20009

***Better Models for Development in Virginia*, written by Edward McMahan and published by the Conservation Fund**

The April 2001 issue of the *Bay Journal*, published by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, included an excellent and in-depth book review of *Better Models*. The review touched on the legislative particulars of development in Virginia, and alternatives to sprawl that is engulfing the Virginia countryside. The review mentions various programs and approaches some of the counties in the state are taking or have implemented. The book grew out of a similar volume the Conservation Fund developed for the Shenandoah Valley two years ago that was very successful and stirred interest in creating better growth. The *Bay Journal* notes that based on the success of *Better Models*, the Virginia Environmental Endowment approached and is working with the Conservation Fund to create a similar book for the entire state.

Better Models for Development in Virginia is a 108-page book available ($15) from the Conservation Fund, 703-525-6300 or www.conservationfund.org.

Planning for

Habitat Conservation

Editor's Note - This article marks the second of a five-part series by VNPS Conservation Chair Jessica Strother on the various ways to ensure and plan for habitat conservation. The series is intended to provide examples of successful and helpful ways taxpayers and professionals can purposefully plan for habitat conservation and bio-diversity. The information provided is only an overview of the issues.

Every individual needs to develop a land ethic

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It's wrong when it tends to be otherwise." - Aldo Leopold

In his book *Consilience*, E. O. Wilson discusses how the human brain developed to produce amongst other things "language and its symbol-based product, culture. The result," he says, "was the capacity to take possession of the planet." This occurred "to the grief of most preexisting life forms." (p. 98)

We humans now directly or indirectly affect the entire planet with our actions. Although I might live in Amissville, Virginia, because of the global economy, the choices I make affect ecosystems and people in China (where my shoes were made), British Columbia (where the wood for my house was harvested and milled), Brazil (where my coffee was grown), the South Pacific (where the fish I'm having for dinner was caught), and California (source of the citrus fruit I had for breakfast).

Most people are either ignorant of or choose not to see the impacts their actions have on the local and global environment. But if you care for the health of the earth and the people that live on it, then propriety insists that you consider all of your actions in the

(See Your decisions, page 9)

Rain gardens: Let the plants do the cleaning

What is a rain garden?

Rain gardens are landscaped areas designed to capture stormwater runoff, remove pollutants, and restore groundwater. They capitalize on the natural biochemical activity in mulch and soil to remove toxins from polluted water. Rain gardens prevent non-point source pollution from entering streams.

Forests maintain clean water

The rain garden is modeled after the ecological functions in a forest. Trees intercept precipitation before it reaches the forest floor. Organic material absorbs water and allows it to percolate through the soil, replenishing the groundwater table. Plants restore water to the atmosphere through evapotransporation. In the forest floor, biochemical activity breaks down organic matter and transforms toxins. Nutrients are made available in the root zone for plant use. This results in clean streams and water bodies in the forested watershed.

Pollution from the suburban landscape

The suburban landscape contains oils and metals from vehicles, animal waste from pets, fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides. Stormwater running off impervious surfaces such as parking lots, walkways, and driveways carries pollutants into storm drains and ditches, and eventually into streams and rivers. Pollution originates from many sources and is carried into waterways by rainfall and stormwater. Pollution from runoff is called non-point source because it does not come out of a pipe from a single point source such as a treatment plant or industrial process.

Traditional engineering practice requires grading to accelerate the flow of water to prevent flooding. This results in erosion and stream sedimentation. Impervious surfaces on roadways, parking lots, driveways and walkways contribute to runoff volumes. Street curbing channels surface flow and further increases runoff volumes.

Landscaped areas containing trees, shrubs, groundcover and mulch have higher water retention value than lawns due to the increased surface areas of the plants, and the porous quality of soil and mulch. Lawns are less pervious than mulched plant beds, and receive chemicals and fertilizers that end up in stormwater runoff. Reducing non-point source pollution from developed landscape dominated by impervious surfaces is our greatest challenge in restoring water quality.

Rain garden design

The rain garden is a recessed planting bed, shaped like a saucer or shallow bowl. It is located and designed to receive runoff from impervious areas or sheet flow from lawns. The highest concentrations of pollutants are in the first half-inch or first flush of a storm. The first flush of stormwater is retained in the depressed area of the rain garden. Ponding is no greater than six inches. Excess water flows into traditional stormwater outfalls or ditches. Water recedes in a few days through evapotransporation and infiltration.

Standing water should remain for no more than four days except in winter when plants are not transpiring.

The rain garden is underlain with sandy loam. It contains three planting zones. The lowest zone will have periods of standing water and extended soil saturation. The middle zone will have periodic soil saturation, and the upper edge will be dry. Plants for the lowest zone are selected for their tolerance to wet conditions and fluctuating water levels. Plants in the middle zone must also tolerate fluctuating soil moisture. Plants in all zones will be subject to drought spells as well. A diversity of trees and shrubs native to local wetlands and streambanks are most suitable for the lower and middle zones. They are adapted to having "wet feet," but also tolerate drought. The upper rim of the garden can be planted in perennials. Berry and nectar producing plants can be incorporated into the design to create food sources for songbirds and butterflies.

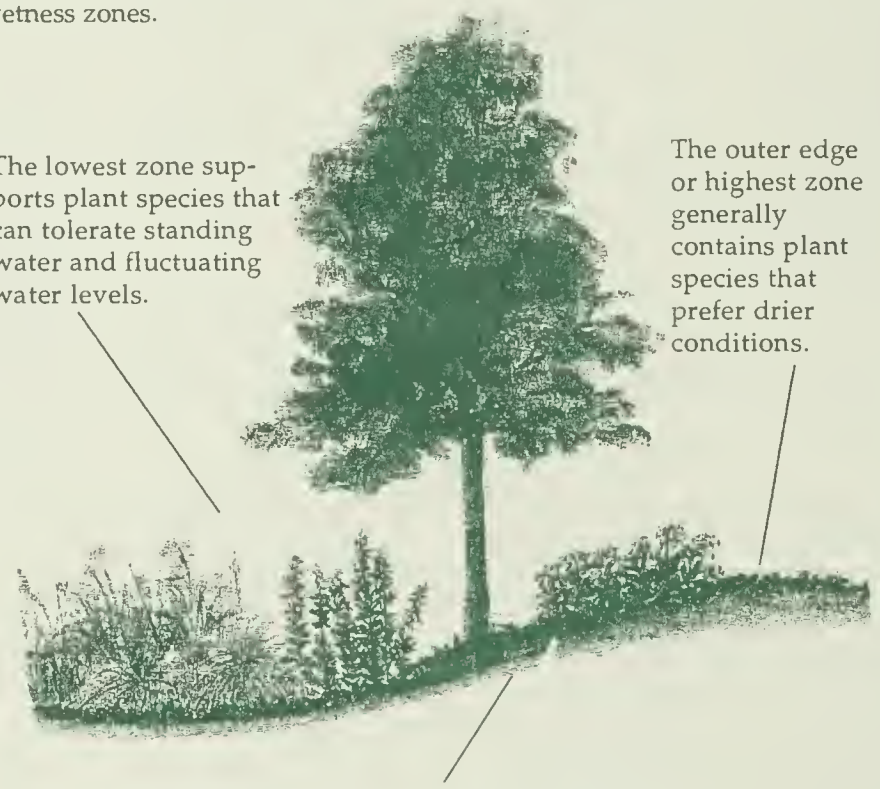
Two to three inches of shredded hardwood mulch is an important component of the pollution removal function. Analysis of the effectiveness of rain gardens indicates that 90 percent of metals is removed from stormwater, primarily by uptake in the mulch. Sixty to 80 percent of phosphorus, some forms of nitrogen and ammonia are removed in the soil. A dense groundcover can replace a mulch layer.

During extended droughts, plants in the rain garden need water. Drainage paths need to be kept clear to the rain garden so that water can flow unobstructed. Mulch is replaced, and accumulated fallen leaves and dead veg-

(See Rain gardens, page 5)

Adding and Replacing Plants

Your rain garden is composed of woody plants (trees and shrubs) and herbaceous species (flowers, grasses and ground covers) planted in three wetness zones.



From the Board continued . . . . . .

(Continued from page 2)

project with board members. Joslin Gallatin, serving as fund raiser, was present as was Marion Lobstein who has been instrumental in instigating the project through the Virginia Academy of Science where she is serving as vice president and president-elect. The promotional booklet was distributed and the year 2007 is set as the goal for publishing the book. VNPS has fully endorsed the project and pledged as much assistance as possible to bring the book to completion.

Jeffrey Glassberg, president of the North American Butterfly Association, sent a letter requesting permission to mail information to our members (excluding those who are so noted on our records) and in return will furnish the society with a list of its regional members to use in informing members of VNPS's existence, mission and programs. This is for a one-time exchange.

It was moved to return Annual Meetings to the second weekend of September. Following a second to the motion and discussion, the board unanimously approved returning to the fall date. The meeting had been moved to June to avoid hurricane activity of the fall; however, many members felt that June is much too busy a time for the meeting. Graduations, weddings, professional meetings and vacations were cited as some of the June events.

Pocahontas Chapter has invited VNPS to the Richmond area for the September 2002 Annual Meeting and the board has accepted that kind invitation. Richard Moss reported prior to the meeting that Pocahontas members have begun research for locations.

Mary Painter, Membership Chair, reported that with 1,692 memberships (total member count is close to 1,800 based on family memberships), 105 registrations for the Annual Meeting is an unacceptable number. Higher attendance should occur. She is exploring the possibility of the Loudoun County VNPS members establishing a separate chapter from the Piedmont Chapter. Duane Tant of Leesburg will work with her.

WELCOME TO THE 10TH VNPS CHAPTER - Anita Tuttle, Fredericksburg Area Chapter President; Nicky Staunton, VNPS President; Ann Gorrell, FAC Steering Committee and Secretary; Hal Wiggins, FAC representative to the VNPS BOD; and Mary Painter, VNPS Membership Chair and society founder, gather in the Blandy library following acceptance of the chapter's petition by the VNPS BOD at its June 1 meeting. (Photo courtesy of Joseph Gorrell)

Having local programs, projects and goals would answer the comments of having to travel too far at night as the reason for not attending chapter programs (a common comment across the state) Note that the membership fee has returned to $20, suspending the temporary $15 initial new member fee.

Bo Dale has prepared information for our website about which of our Registry Sites are open to the public. It is now posted and will be in a future *Bulletin*.

It was suggested that funds be allocated for the president's expenses for the annual meeting and it was moved that funds be budgeted to cover these expenses including that the registration fee be waived and that it be retroactive for 2001. This was approved unanimously.

Wiggins reported on an effort to acquire Crow's Nest area as a National Wildlife Refuge. This rare calcareous ravine forest with Virginia rare plants also has historical significance dating from colonial days (See article in *Bulletin*.) Following a description of the site and the current status, he encouraged members to support the acquisition with letters to Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis and to the USF&W Service

The work on the Long Range Plan will continue under the leadership of Cole Burrell.

VNPS was invited to co-sponsor Adrienne Edwards for a Summer Seminar evening lecture July 2 at Blandy library. VNPS agreed to this opportunity.

•Rain gardens

(Continued from page 4)

etation removed in the fall.

Retrofitting a rain garden

Rain gardens are constructed in new development to receive water from an area no larger than an acre. However, opportunities to retrofit a rain garden into the existing landscape include capturing runoff from parking areas, driveways, walkways, decks or roofs. Downspouts can be directed to discharge away from a building foundation into a rain garden. A section of curb may be cut allowing water to flow into a rain garden. The rain garden is sized to be five to seven percent of the runoff area. When retrofitting a rain garden, the original site grading and stormwater controls are retained so that excess water can move off the site during large storm events. A low-lying area that retains sheet flow off a lawn can be converted to a rain garden instead of growing grass in a wet zone.

Other ideas to reduce runoff

There are other methods to reduce stormwater runoff. Pervious surface materials are available to construct walkways, patios and driveways. Water can be collected from the roof into rain barrels or cisterns and used to water plants during drought. Nontoxic mosquito dunks are available at garden supply stores and mail order catalogs to float in the barrels to prevent breeding insects. Simply replacing lawn with beds of trees, shrubs, groundcover and mulch contributes to improving water quality.

For more information, contact the author of this article: Lisa Billow, 1720 Blair Avenue, Norfolk, VA 23509, Billowl@pwcnorva.navy.mil or 757-444-3009 ext. 371.

Native/exotic question is topsy-turvy when visiting Scandinavian islands

As an amateur botanist fluent only in English, I recently enjoyed seven days of natural wonders of the Åland Islands where the roadsides and fields are filled with colorful flowers. The names of some flowers of Åland were Korvel (*Myrrhis odorata*), Tjarblomster (*Lychnis viscaria*), Gokblomster (*Lychnis floscuculi*), Bergssyra (*Rumex acetosella*) and Karingtand (*Lotus corniculatus*). Whoa! That's birdsfoot trefoil! My immediate response was: invasive alien plant. Then, I reflected, perhaps not on Åland. Maybe they are native there. I'm the non-native.

The Åland Islands form an autonomous, demilitarized province of Finland. The islands form an archipelago of 6,500 islands and skerries. Most of the islands are larger than 3,000 square meters and are located between Finland and Sweden between the Baltic Sea and Gulf of Bothnia. The main island is where 90 percent of the population of 25,000 persons lives. (population of my city of Manassas, Virginia: 35,000 in 10 square miles). Åland has its own parliament, "Lagting." (January 1, 1993). Swedish is its language. Finnish currency is in use. Åland is located at 60 degrees latitude and 20 degrees longitude. The land is still rising and artifacts are documented from 4200 B.C. Kastelholm Castle dates from 1388. Carl Linneaus did a botanical inventory on Åland. (Martin Ogle of Potomac Overlook in Arlington shared this bit of information before I left.)

We --my daughter, Lou, my brother-in-law, Larry, and I--were there for a Lindholm family reunion (Larry's mother's family). The midsummer pole was celebrated; 24 hours of daylight occurred; the Viking site at Borgboda was visited where there used to be a large body of water, but now grain fields exist. A 10-hour trip by private boat revealed trumpeter swan and goslings as well as eider duck families in every cove of the rocky landforms.

Plantanthera bifolia, butterfly orchid
Illustration by Nicky Staunton

My daily pleasure was noting the flowers, trees, shrubs and birds. I could confirm their names thanks to Linneaus! Without the Latin, I would never have been able to understand the Swedish names. I knew no botanist there, but located a bookstore in Mariehamm and purchased several books: Faltflora (flowers), Faglarna (birds), Var Flora Ifarg Kryptogamer (ferns and mosses) and Insekta (insects).

Why am I telling you these things? Two reasons. One is to praise Carl Linneaus and his work that gives us a universal botanical language in Latin. Our own *Flora of Virginia* that is planned to be published will contain the Latin names for our plants and that will enable most people to cross reference the common names and botanical names with those of other languages. We searched for a "butterfly orchid" and discovered it to be Nattviol (*Plantanthera bifolia*) and learned that Adam and Eve on Åland is *Dactylorhiza latifolia*.

The other reason is to affirm natural roadside flora growth and its control by only appropriate mowing. If the roadsides of Åland had been lined with dead vegetation rather than colorful flowers, the trip would have lost an enormous part of its enjoyment. Live roadside vegetation is good for tourism, Virginia!

I hope each of you will find beautiful plants wherever you go this summer.

Nicky Staunton, VNPS President

The foundation of the Flora of Virginia Project is now established

The Foundation of the Flora of Virginia Project, Inc is now the Virginia non-stock corporation that will carry out the work of producing the *Flora of Virginia*. This is the first step toward achieving federal 501(c)3 (non-profit) status. The foundation's board of directors is now being assembled and a first meeting is scheduled for late August. Nicky Staunton and Marion Lobstein will both serve on the board.

In early fall, Virginia botanists in groups such as the Flora Committee of the Virginia Academy of Science and the Virginia Botanical Associates (group that publishes the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora*) will meet with Chris Ludwig and Alan Weakley to work on details of the format of the *Flora of Virginia*. Several VNPS members will be involved in these efforts.

Continuing VNPS support of the Flora of Virginia Project is essential to its success. At the June Annual Meeting, presentations given by Chris, Joslin Gallatin and Marion were well received. VNPS members who responded to the Flora Project questionnaire will be contacted in the fall as the project

(See Flora, page 10)

Calcareous ravine forest complex is special place

There are many reasons why the Crow's Nest is a special place. Over 3,800 acres of mature hardwood forests five-miles long and two-miles in width make it special. This rare example of unfragmented forest surrounded by a tidal estuary on three sides is unique. However, scientists from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage have confirmed in May 1999 that Crow's Nest also contains several miles of rare calcareous ravine forests.

Today, shell-marl/calcareous ravine forests are not common anywhere in the Mid-Atlantic region. These communities are rare to the coastal plain ecosystem. Two nutrient-rich communities associated with lime sands and localized shell concretions can be broadly classified as Basic Mesic Forests (G2, globally imperiled). Another rare community that is typically associated with the shell-marl/calcareous environments, the Basic Oak-Hickory Forest (G2, globally imperiled), is found on two very steep slopes facing Potomac Creek.

Many of the shell-marl/calcareous ravine forests explored by botanist Fernald have since been heavily logged. In assessing natural communities in need of protection, DCR listed the state's few remaining calcareous ravine forests as conservation priorities. The Crow's Nest site is perhaps Virginia's best remaining example of this rare forest community.

The ravine forests at Crow's Nest begin with calcareous springs and rills with available "marl" and friable soil supporting rich forests of *Carya cordiformis, Fraxinus americana, Ulmus rubra, Asimina triloba, Juglans cinerea,* and many other trees and shrubs characteristic of the Coastal Plain. On the wooded slopes *Hydrangea arborescens* abounds and *Menispermum canadense* twines with *Vitus vulpina.* The herbaceous flora is as rich as one could ask, with *Panax quinquefolium, Orchis spectabilis, Aplectrum hyemale, Cimicifuga racemosa, Dentaria lacinata, Heuchera americana,* and *Nemophila microcalyx.*

*Jodie Wiggins and Greg Weiler, the Mason Neck NWR Manager, are dwarfed by a giant chinquapin oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) at Crow's Nest. (Photo courtesy Hal Wiggons)*

Several Stafford County records for plants and two state-listed endangered plant species have recently been found at Crow's Nest. State-listed species include ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) found in the rich ravines of the peninsula and river bulrush (*Scirpus fluviatilis*) found in the adjacent tidal marshes of Potomac Creek. Small whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*) occurs in subacidic mixed hardwood forests at several nearby sites in Stafford County. More field work is necessary to complete a full inventory of plants and animals that make up the rich forest communities at Crow's Nest. However, due to the large size and richness of the forest-complex at Crow's Nest, long-term data collection is required to fully archive this amazing habitat.

Nineteen Stafford County records were found, 12 of which are considered disjunct plant species: river bulrush (*Scirpus fluviatilis*), sharp-scaled sedge (*Carex oxylepis*), squarrose sedge (*Carex squarrosa*), ribbed sedge (*Carex virescens*), lowland brittle fern (*Cystopteris protrusa*), slender toothwort (*Cardamine angustata*), wavy hairgrass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*), glade

(See Crow's Nest, page 8)

•Crow's Nest

(Continued from page 7)

fern (*Athyrium pycnocarpon*), pumpkin ash (*Fraxinus profunda*), southern hairy woodrush (*Luzula acuminata*), American wild mint (*Mentha arvensis*), small flowered baby blue eyes (*Nemophylla aphylla*), one flowered cancer root (*Orobanche uniflora*), American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), black-fruited clearweed (*Pilea fontana*), spotted pondweed (*Potamogeton pulcher*), chinquapin oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*), rock buttercup (*Ranunculus micranthus*), zig-zag goldenrod (*Solidago flexicaulis*), elm-leaved goldenrod (*Solidago ulmifolia*), yellow frost violet (*Viola pubescens*), and southern wild rice (*Zizaniopsis miliacea*).

In the words of Gary Fleming, Virginia Division of Natural Heritage, "Overall, Crow's Nest supports one of the finest—if not the finest—upland hardwood forests remaining in the Virginia Coastal Plain."

History

Crow's Nest was originally the home of the Travers family and was named after the "The Crow" a big, black, three-masted schooner owned by the family. In 1662, Raleigh Travers, the first landowner at Crow's Nest received a patent of 3,650 acres on Potomac Creek. He married Hanna Ball, George Washington's aunt and James Madison's great-great aunt. Crow's Nest and "The Crow" came to the Daniel family through the marriage of Peter Daniel and Sarah Travers. The Daniels, with their own ship, could transport tobacco and necessary supplies as well as the finest wines and manufactured goods from Europe.

Travers Daniel (1741-1824) married Mildred Stone, daughter of Thomas Stone, signer of the Declaration of Independence and the great-great granddaughter of a 17th-century Maryland governor. Both Mildred Daniel and Travers Daniel rest at Crow's Nest in well-marked graves in the family cemetery. A magnificent brick and wood manor house called "Tranquility" was built on a high ridge near the point of the peninsula in the late 18th century but is no longer standing.

Directly across from Crow's Nest Point on Accokeek Creek is "Potowomac Town" or Indian Point, the site of the ancestral village of the Potomac Indians. This is one of the most endangered archaeological sites in Virginia, as the remains of a 13th century, ringed palisaded Indian town are found here. Pocahontas was captured near here in Potomac Creek in 1613.

The neighbors of the Daniels were the Brents of Woodstock and Richland, the Mercers of Marlborough, and the Moncures of Claremont. Mr. and Mrs. Daniel would travel to the old Potomac Church, the remains are along Potomac Creek and Brooke Road, on "a coach drawn by four gray horses."

John Moncure Daniel was born in 1825 and was the third Daniel to bear that name. The first, his grandfather, was born at Crow's Nest, and after serving as a senior army surgeon in the War of 1812, died at Crow's Nest. Travers Daniel was not only owner of the seagoing vessel "The Crow" but a slaveowner who was at the same time an ardent emancipationist. The second John Moncure Daniel, born at Crow's Nest, was a country doctor and local official in Stafford County.

The third John Moncure Daniel became a figure of considerable importance in 19th century American history. He left Stafford County for Richmond as a young man and established himself as a leading editor when still in his twenties. In 1853, President Franklin Pierce appointed him American charge d'affaires, and later minister to the Kingdom of Sardinia, the predecessor of modern Italy.

At the beginning of 1861, after South Carolina seceded from the Union, John Moncure Daniel returned to Virginia to resume control of his paper, the *Richmond Examiner*. During this period, the Union Army occupied the Daniel manor home "Tranquility." Daniel had not originally wanted Virginia to secede, but in 1861 he decided it was inevitable and, largely through his paper, he became perhaps the main force in bringing about Virginia's secession. Originally a strong supporter of Jefferson Davis as president of the Confederacy, Daniel became the strongest critic of him in the war. Wounded in an 1864 dual with the Treasurer of the Confederacy, Daniel died in Richmond in 1865 at the age of 39, several days before the city was occupied by the Union. His dream, he told a friend, had been to rebuild his family's home at Crow's Nest after the Civil War.

John Moncure Daniel was the great-nephew of Peter Vivian Daniel (1794-1860) who was an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Peter Vivian Daniel, born at Crow's Nest, was also a figure of importance in American history. He married the daughter of Edmund Randolph, Attorney General and Secretary of State during the administration of President George Washington. Justice Daniel formed part of the overwhelming majority of the court that decided Dred Scott should be returned to slavery in the infamous 1857 decision.

After the death of John Moncure Daniel in 1865, history seems to have ended at Crow's Nest until 1950 when Senator Frank Boykin bought the Crow's Nest peninsula. A portion of the peninsula was timbered at Crow's Nest. In the early 1970s, Daniel descendents secured permission to build a brick wall in the family cemetery so the tombstones could be preserved. This wall and attached tombstones remain today as the only standing structures over the 3,800 acre forested peninsula.

Current Status for Conservation of the Peninsula

During February 2000, two days of public meetings were conducted by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for a proposal to establish a new wildlife refuge at Crow's Nest, the "Accokeek National Wildlife Refuge." In October 2000, an Environmental Assessment was issued with a "Finding of No Significant Impact." The project has unprecedented support from the general public and the strong support of 1st District Congresswoman JoAnn Davis. The acquisition process appears to move slowly, as the FWS is still in the process of obtaining information about the peninsula. To get information about the acquisition process for the proposed Accokeek National Wildlife Refuge, contact FWS Realty Officer Walt Quist at 413-253-8566.

Hal Wiggins, Fredericksburg Chapter

Your decisions could have a far-reaching impact

(Continued from page 3)

context of what effect they have. In short, we must each develop a land ethic. This land ethic is a definition of what we believe and what we consider acceptable in human behavior as it affects other things and other people. Our land ethic should act as a litmus test with which we measure the soundness of our actions.

Your land ethic must be true to you. It must have the power of conviction. In turn, committing to a land ethic requires you to be honest and informed about the impacts of your actions. Some people might think this is a call for people to live guilty lives, anguishing over every detail. That is not my intent. The truth CAN be depressing, but that doesn't make it less true. We can choose not to acknowledge the effects our actions have, but that is at best dishonesty and at worst hypocrisy.

Developing a land ethic may be easy for some and difficult for others. Many of us already live by a moral code that governs many of our actions. We subconsciously measure what we do against the impacts we can foresee. But the application of this moral code is usually limited to our immediate surroundings -- the people and places with which we come in direct contact. The challenge is to broaden the application of this code to all of our actions, to be aware that things are complicated and try to make the best choices. What did it take to get my cup of coffee to the local convenience store? What effect does my choice of transportation have on the cleanliness of the air in my region or the average temperature globally? What is happening downstream of my yard when I over-apply fertilizer to my lawn?

I hope that individuals, communities, organizations (including VNPS), companies and governments will adopt sound land ethics that will guide their actions. In lieu of an existing land ethic, I propose that we each begin with the simple but powerful words of Aldo Leopold which appear at the beginning of this article: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It's wrong when it tends to be otherwise." That is hard to improve on, but it can be expanded to include human communities and the systems of the earth that support our lives.

Charles Smith, VNPS Fundraising Chair

Outdoor Calendar

Invasive Plants: Action on all Fronts, Tuesday August 14 & Wednesday August 15, Swarthmore College, PA, 215-247-5777 Ext. 156/125

10th Annual Native Plant Seminar and Sale, Saturday, August 25, Irvine Nature Center, Stevenson, MD, 410-484-2413, www.explorenature.org

Investing in Natural Capital, 2001 National Urban Forest Conference, September 5-8, Washington, D.C., Omni Shoreham Hotel, Kasey Russell, 304-345-7578 or kaseyrussell@citynet.net

A Vision for Wildlife Viewing, 2001 Watchable Wildlife Conference, Friday September 14-Monday September 17, Saint Paul, MN, 800-657-3637, www.watchablewildlife.org

Open Nursery Day to Benefit The Flora of Virginia Project – Sunday September 16, Virginia Natives Nursery, Hume, VA

Mid-Atlantic Governors' Conference on Greenways, Blueways, Green Infrastructure: Creating Connections for the New Millennium, Sunday-Wednesday, September 16-19, Arlington VA, www.dcr.state.va.us/prr/2001conf.htm

Virginia's Natural History Retreat, Friday-Sunday September 14-16, co-sponsored by Wintergreen Nature Foundation & Virginia Museum of Natural History, 800-266-2444 about Virginia's Natural History Retreat package

See the address label for your membership expiration date

VNPS Membership/Renewal Form

Name(s)_____

Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

___Individual $20

___Family $30 ___Student $15

___Patron $50 ___Associate (groups) $40*

___Sustaining $100 ___Life $500

*Please designate one person as delegate for Associate membership

To give a gift membership or join additional chapters: Enclose dues, name, address, and chapter (non-voting memberships in any other than your primary chapter are $5)

I wish to make an additional contribution to ___VNPS or_____Chapter in the amount of ___$10___$25___$50___$100___$(Other)_____

_____Check if you do not wish your name to be listed to be exchanged with similar organizations in a chapter directory

Make check payable to VNPS and mail to:

VNPS Membership Chair, Blandy Experimental Farm, 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2, Boyce, VA 22620

Membership dues are tax deductible in the amount they exceed $5. Contributions are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

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Nicky Staunton, President
Nancy Sorrells, Editor

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The deadline for the next issue is October 1

Annual Meeting provided unique experiences

(Continued from page 1)

Our "blast from the past" came from our excursion led by Kristin Zimet and Carrie Blair to West Virginia's Ice Mountain, a Nature Conservancy Preserve. Ice Mountain treats the careful visitor to 17 fern species, bunchberry, twinflower and other northern flora that make their home in this unique area where blasts of cold air (38° F) are felt escaping from natural tunnels in this mountainside of rock. This phenomenon occurs at only 700 feet above sea level along North River Mills. From our notes, the geological term for this formation is *algific talus* or cold-producing slope. The boulders insulate ice trapped in caves from the last ice age 10,000 years in the past, providing a honeycomb of microclimates suitable for these northern plants to thrive.

Our guides were so knowledgeable and generous with their time. With their help we learned more about fern identification, which has now become Bill's new challenge. Look out Wherry!

To be able to visit such a unique slice of nature, and all the flora that accompanies it, truly gave us pause to appreciate those who made and continue to make Ice Mountain's conservation possible.

More time for reflection came to us during George Fenwick's talk about birds. He helped broaden our awareness of the plight birds face when they leave our inviting properties and are confronted with human technology in the shape of radio towers, and other man-made impacts on the environment like chemical spraying and our feline friends.

We headed home Sunday morning stopping at the Jones' homestead where we appreciated their work to restore natives in their space. I remind myself when I am startled by a snake, that when we invite wildlife with our plantings, we invite it in all shapes and sizes and not just birds and butterflies but also the caterpillars that eat plants—so plant a few more—and mammals such as the bear that visited with the Jones for quite a few days in May. He wreaked havoc on some of their plantings because of his sheer size; devouring the Jack-in-the-pulpits for breakfast! I know they were thrilled to be watching from inside.

Thanks again to the Piedmont Chapter and our stalwart Blandy folks! You gave us many great memories and the opportunities to converse and plan with other like-minded VNPS members who are concerned with the conservation of special places like Ice Mountain.

Carol & Bill Gardner, Shenandoah Chapter

Flora of Virginia Project continues to move forward

(Continued from page 6)

reaches another stage of development. Financial support from the John Clayton, Potowmack and Prince William chapters and from individual VNPS members has already been given or pledged. Tax-deductible donations to support this project may be made through the Virginia Academy of Science's Flora Committee through a special account set up to receive donations. These donations may be sent to: Flora of Virginia Project, UVA-Wise Foundation, Wise, VA 24293. If VNPS members have additional suggestions, comments, or questions regarding the *Flora of Virginia*, please e-mail Marion at mblobst@mnsinc.com or call 703-536-7150.

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Conserving wild flowers and wild places

www.vnps.org

HAPPY 20TH BIRTHDAY, VNPS!

Our VNPS *Bulletin* does not have a "Letters to the Editor" column, but this letter from Brian O'Neill of the South Hampton Roads Chapter prompted a response. A portion of the letter sent to his chapter and printed in its newsletter follows with responses that will give members an idea of what VNPS "does." In light of the fact that our society is entering its 20th year, this is a good time to look at where VNPS is and where it is headed. Brian's suggestions are italicized and the VNPS answers follow. The opinions expressed in the letter are Brian's and do not necessarily reflect a position made by VNPS.

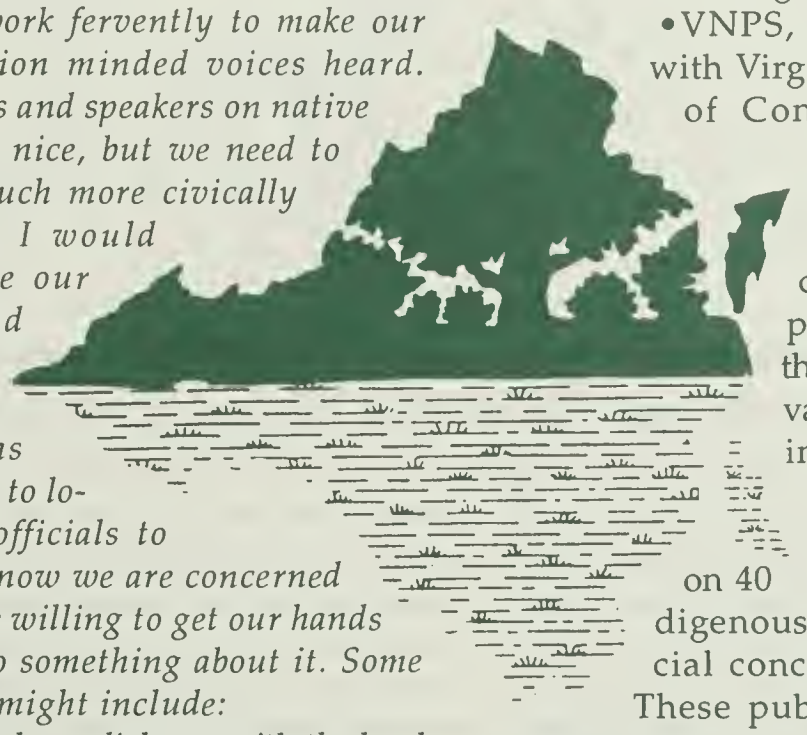
I am writing this letter out of a sense of frustration with the hope our organization, statewide as well as local, will agree there is an urgent problem and take steps to improve the current situation.

The fact is our environment is under siege. Everywhere you look, everywhere you drive, the native landscape is changing. "Progress" seems to demand our natural world be replaced with mowed turf, or endless miles of concrete, asphalt and sound walls. City arborists and landscape professional recommend the planting of non-native species in soldier-like rows along city thoroughfares often within sight of the remnant forest, thus changing the face of our local areas. The native plantings that make Tidewater, Virginia, unique are replaced with plants from elsewhere with the result that we resemble Anytown, U.S.A.

There seems to be no one in city or state government to curb the wrongs wrought by these intrusive encroachments on the native scene....Decisions made in the name of business or development are not always the best decisions for the welfare of the state. Try to tell that to your children and grandchildren in future years when the only natural spaces are in reserves and all our animals are confined to zoos.

I call on our local native plant society to work fervently to make our conservation minded voices heard. Plant sales and speakers on native plants are nice, but we need to become much more civically involved. I would like to see our board and its president propose ideas and action to local state officials to let them know we are concerned and we are willing to get our hands dirty to do something about it. Some proposals might include:

1. Develop a dialogue with the local city arborists to recommend that native species, where appropriate, be given first priority in plantings that our taxes finance.



•VNPS publishes information in support of native plant use for chapters to use locally.

•Chapters may place natural resource managers, elected representatives, and nurseries on the mailing list for our publications which include the *Bulletin*, Virginia Wildflower of the Year brochures, and the nursery source list for native plants. They may sponsor any of these people to attend the VNPS Annual Workshop covering horticulture, conservation and botany subjects.

•Checklists of trees, shrubs, vines, ferns and wildflowers in Virginia are available through the society.

•VNPS, in partnership with Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Natural Heritage, compiled and published one of the first lists of invasive alien plants in Virginia. This was followed by a set of fact sheets on 40 invasive non-indigenous species of special concern in Virginia. These publications led to "Native Plants for Conservation, Restoration and Landscaping" compiled by DCR, VNPS, representatives from

(See VNPS, page 7)

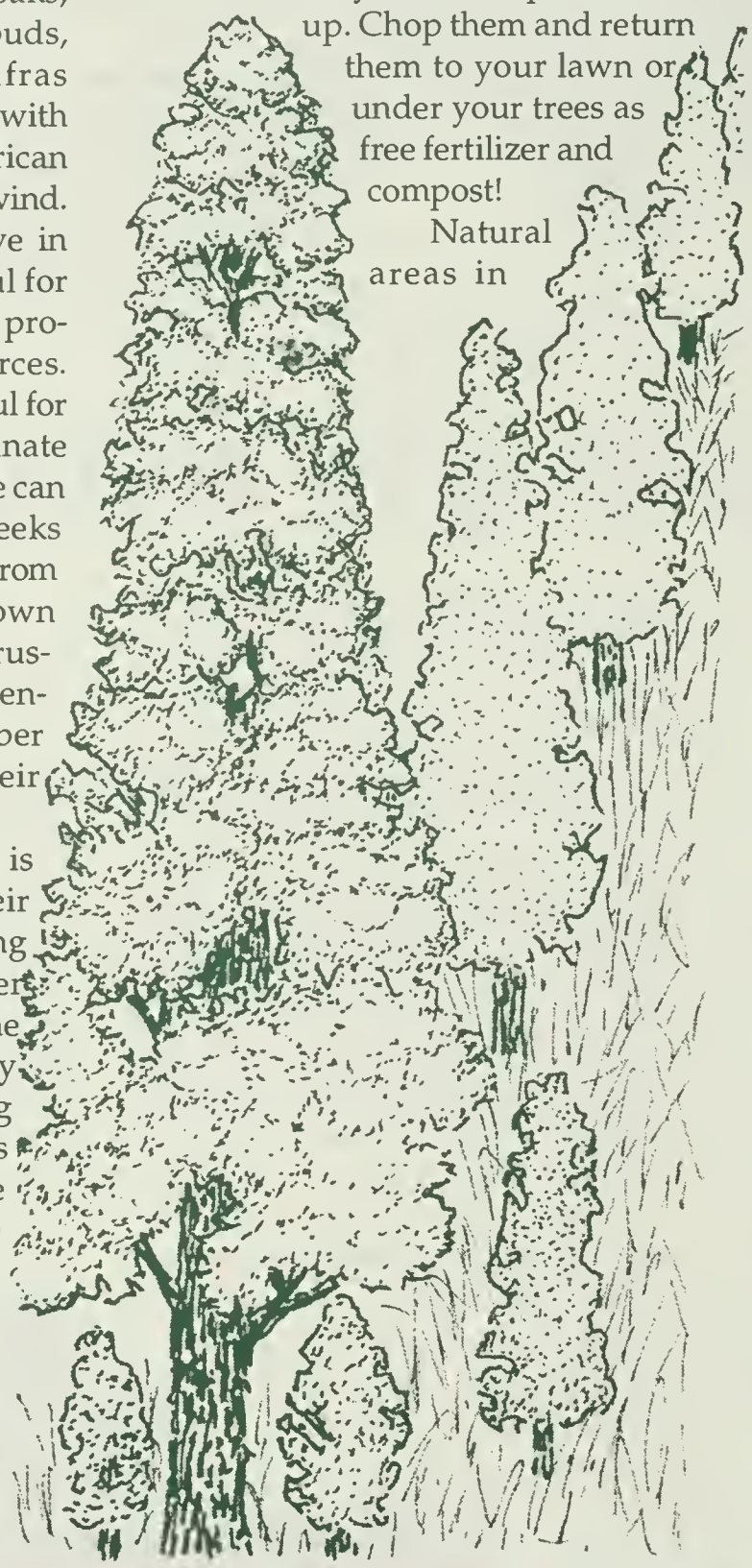
From the President . . . . . .

Autumn trees remind us to be thankful

The autumn colors of our trees are sparkling. Backlighted, leaves are quaking in the breeze. There are russet oaks, amber tulip poplars, chrome red buds, scarlet maples, and the sassafras matches my goldfish, Fred. Along with those images, my beautiful American flag is waving and dancing in the wind.

I'm thankful. Thankful to live in America and in Virginia. Thankful for our freedom to work to continue to protect our beautiful natural resources. Those trees I mention -- I'm thankful for all of them! We are a most fortunate people to live in Virginia where we can enjoy seasons changing. These weeks of warm colors of autumn are a gift from our trees as they begin to shut down until spring. Those reds, oranges, russets and the warmth of lavenders envelop us with a big hug to remember until we can "dance" under their opening buds next spring.

Appreciating Virginia's trees is not difficult when we enjoy their beauty, majesty, and the rustling leaves creating tree songs. Whether a single tree or a forest, they are the base of our healthy existence. They absorb carbon dioxide, converting it to our oxygen. Trees keep our soils from eroding and at the same time are filtering pollutants from the rainwater flowing over and by their roots. Their timber gives us shelter; their bark, medicines; wildlife enjoy shelter and food from our trees and they give much more. We enjoy a ripe paw paw as much as the opossums do. And those leaves that are heaping on your lawn are really a gift: don't rake them to a curb, even if your town picks them up. Chop them and return them to your lawn or under your trees as free fertilizer and compost!



Natural areas in Virginia are among our concerns in VNPS and that means trees! When we organized in 1982, huge areas of trees were being cleared for development. It's a shock to see natural woods of 10 or 15 acres disappear with not a single tree standing at the end of one day! Natural areas continue to be lost to development, recreation and to aggressive plants not native to the area. We hope that VNPS efforts have helped protect Virginia's native plants by letting you get to know and enjoy them and then wanting to protect their right to live.

1982-2002! Happy 20th Birthday-year, Virginia Native Plant Society! From a charter member's viewpoint, VNPS is entering an exciting year that reflects growth in many directions other than our nearly 2,000 members. We are setting goals and reorganizing our society. We are finally working toward the creation of a *Flora of Virginia*! With your involvement, we can eagerly say, "Come on, 2002. We are ready!"

Your President,
Nicky Staunton

P.S. With a new VNPS year and new board members, there are long-serving board members who deserve special appreciation. Tell them thanks for protecting native plants. Leaving are: Allen Belden (Director-at-Large), Butch Kelly (1st Vice President), Nancy Ross Hugo (Publicity and Director-at-Large), Charles Smith (Membership/Fund Raising/Stakeholders Meeting Organizer) and June Griffin (Recording Secretary). Each has been given a Jefferson Cup engraved with the VNPS name and the years they served

Seeds needed for Virginia meadow plant community

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond is working to create a Virginia meadow plant community on a one-acre site near the entrance to the garden. The meadow is designed to be educational as well as aesthetically pleasing and will be comprised of plants native to Virginia. It will contain plants from all regions of the state. You can help contribute to this project by sending seeds of naturally occurring natives to Ginter. The staff is looking to maintain local genotypes. A selection of species being sought are: *Aster grandiflorus, Asclepias tuberosa, Mimulus ringens, Penstemon digitalis and or P. canescens, Solidago odora, Zizia aurea, Eryngium yuccafolium, Liatris spicata, Parthenium integrifolium, Sorghastrum nutans* and *Andropogon gerardii*. If you have seed available of any of these species or closely related species, please contact Michael Sawyer at LGBG e-mail: Horts@lewisginter.org or call 804-262-9887 (x333). Please keep in mind we are only looking for true Virginia natives. Information on where the seeds were collected will also be helpful. Thank you!

Natural Area Preserve protects special Virginia habitats

Planning for

Habitat Conservation

Editor's Note - This article marks the third of a five-part series organized by VNPS Conservation Chair Jessica Strother on the various ways to ensure and plan for habitat conservation. The series is intended to provide examples of successful and helpful ways taxpayers and professionals can purposefully plan for habitat conservation and biodiversity. The information provided is only an overview of the issues.

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation dedicated its first parcel to the Natural Area Preserve System in 1990. That first dedication was a 1,250-acre state-purchase of wind-tide marshes, maple-gum swamp and Atlantic white-cedar pocosin on the North Landing River in southern Virginia Beach. Additional purchases of property have expanded the North Landing River Natural Area Preserve to 3,400 acres. Today the Virginia Natural Area Preserve System numbers 33 preserves totaling 20,500 acres. Included in the system are some of Virginia's finest limestone barrens, wet prairie, Chesapeake Bay beach and dune systems and long-leaf pine forest.

Natural Area Preserves are lands of high biodiversity value that are actively managed to maintain the rare species and communities they support. Future management direction and allowable uses on Natural Area Preserves are prescribed in a Deed of Dedication, a legal document very similar to a conservation easement. Twenty-six of the 33 Natural Area Preserves are owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), but DCR or public ownership of land is not a requirement for dedication of natural areas. Robert and Elizabeth Mueller's property in Augusta County, a site on the VNPS Natural Area Registry, was our first privately dedicated Natural Area Preserve. Also included in the system are lands owned by private individuals, city and county government, a state university and land owned by local and national conservation organizations.

The mission of the Virginia Natural Heritage Program is to conserve Virginia's biodiversity through inventory, protection and stewardship. The Natural Heritage Program staff members measure biodiversity by the occurrence of rare species of plants and animals in Virginia and the rare or otherwise significant natural community types of the state. Information on the location and quality of these occurrences is generated through field efforts of our Natural Heritage Program biologists, our cooperators and scientists who have come before us. From this information natural area acquisition and protection priorities are selected. To become a preserve, a site must contain viable occurrences of state or globally rare species or a natural community type that is rare or is exemplary due to its extensive acreage or lack of disturbance. The Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation must then sign a Deed of Dedication.

Natural Area Preserves are managed for the objective of providing suitable habitat conditions for the continued existence of rare or declining species of plants and animals and natural communities. All preserves must have a Natural Area Management Plan prepared by our staff. The plans prescribe management actions that are required to meet this objective. For example, efforts are taken to protect fragile and rare habitats from the potentially destructive impacts of visitation while still allowing for compatible and appropriate types of public use. The natural process of fire is often lacking from many of the preserves so the use of prescribed burning is frequently used to create or maintain habitat conditions required by fire-adapted and fire-dependent species and communities. Surface water flow and soil moisture conditions may be restored by blocking or filling ditches. Very often, invasive species must be controlled to reduce the competition to native species and to restore the integrity of natural communities. The philosophy of our natural area management and a discussion of appropriate and inappropriate uses of the preserves are contained in DCR's Natural Area Preserve Management Guidelines. The guidelines are available from the Natural Heritage Program.

A significant number of Virginia's natural areas are on private lands and continued private ownership of the property is likely. Natural Heritage Program staff members arrange personal meetings with the owners to walk the property and to present information on the natural heritage significance of the land. Suggestions for appropriate management and options for protection such as the Virginia Registry of Natural Areas, leases, easements or dedications are discussed. Owners of these private lands may want to sell or give their land for conservation purposes. If they do, there are two new financial incentives to encourage this. The sale of a parcel of land or the sale of an easement on property that will be used for open space is exempt from Virginia capital gains

(See Preserves, page 9)

Legislative issues

Conservation-minded Virginians be alert

The Virginia Conservation Network (VCN) in Richmond focuses on legislative issues that affect Virginia's environment. Virginia Native Plant Society is an affiliate member and therefore receives information about important conservation legislation.

With the first day of the 2002 Virginia General Assembly Session just a few weeks away, VCN has prepared information about issues, the legislative process and what you can do. Once you are well informed about issues, VCN encourages you to visit your delegate and senator, prepared with facts to share with them in support of the issues you choose. They have a suggested schedule on their website (**www.vcnva.org**) for you to use. You can check status of bills at: **http://leg1.state.va.us**.

Constituent Viewpoint toll-free line: 1-800-889-0229 (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.) or 804-698-1990 is another useful tool.

Dates to remember - On Saturday, December 8 during a VCN legislative workshop in Richmond, you can talk with legislators about the issues you choose. On Monday, January 21 there will be a VCN Citizen's Lobby Day so you can meet your delegate and senator again to talk more about the issues important to you. There will be a VCN Legislative Reception that evening with another opportunity to talk to legislators and representatives from DEQ, DCR and other state agencies.

Getting the facts - A substantial document packet was sent to VNPS by e-mail and a copy will be distributed to each of our ten chapters to use during the coming months to educate chapter members and alert them to specific issues that are related to our natural areas and native plants. Eleven white papers were prepared and two are highlighted here.

The VCN website (www.vcnva.org) has the entire document online for you to download or if you do not have internet and would like to receive the information, write to VCN or call:

Virginia Conservation Network
1001 East Broad Street, Suite LL35-C, Richmond VA 23219
804-644-0283
Ellen Shepard (540-362-3538) or ellenshepard@yahoo.com
Patti Jackson (804-780-2898) or pjackson@jamesriverassociation.org

Snail mail effective

VCN states that "snail mail" letters still make the most impact with many legislators. Address your letters using the following model:

MODEL MAILING ADDRESS DURING SESSION

The Honorable _____
(use full name)
P.O. Box 406
Richmond, VA 23218

DearSenator/Delegate_____:

_____

VIRGINIA CONSERVATION NETWORK PRIORITIES

- Funding for Land Conservation in Virginia
- Farm Preservation
- Transportation Reform
- Smart Growth
- Water Quality
- Air Quality

(Note: White papers are statements on particular conservation issues. Each white paper contains a statement of issue, background, recommendations and contact information. Please go to the VCN website to obtain the full text of the White Papers cited.)

Two legislative issues that are particularly important to VNPS:

1. White Paper - Increased Funding for Conservation (Natural Resources Budget)

Recommends that the Office of Natural Resources be recognized for its critical importance and receives sufficient funding to accomplish its mission and the constitutional commitment of Article XI that "it shall be the policy of the Commonwealth to conserve, develop, and utilize its natural resources, its public lands and historical sites and buildings," and that it shall be the Commonwealth's policy to protect its atmosphere, lands, and water from pollution, impairment or destruction for the benefit, enjoyment and general welfare of the people of the Commonwealth."

[The White Paper addresses the fact that out of every dollar in the state budget, barely a penny goes toward conservation of natural resources, including DCR-DNH. DNH is responsible for biological inventory of species in Virginia, ranking them, acquiring and managing sensitive rare land sites.]

2. White Paper - State Funding for Land Conservation

To protect Virginia's special lands, the General Assembly established the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF) that provides grants to state agencies, localities, and nonprofit organizations for land conservation. Although the General Assembly authorized $6.2 million for the foundation in fiscal years 2001-2002, the governor eliminated the Foundation's FY 02 funding as part of an effort to balance the state budget this year. The recommendation is that the General Assembly should establish a dedicated funding source for land conservation that would direct up to $40 million of state recordation tax revenues to VLCF.

VNPS members are encouraged to obtain the information from VCN and to participate in the events bringing you together with legislators to exchange information and to give voice for Virginia's native plants and their ecosystems and the agencies that do the actual work with our natural resources.

Nicky Staunton, VNPS President

Take a walk on the wild side

The bright days of fall are upon us. What a great time to be outdoors tramping through the leaves. Several of our VNPS Registry Sites are open to the public and provide just the place to enjoy our seasonally changing explorations. Choose one from the list below and enjoy! Contact your local chapter for other interesting areas.

BUFFALO CREEK NATURAL AREA PRESERVE
Blue Ridge Wildflower Society
This Westvaco property is approximately 3 miles west of Evington on Rt. 24, south of Lynchburg, off Rt. 29

G. RICHARD THOMPSON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
Piedmont Chapter
I-66W, exit 18, Markham, right on Rt. 55 to Linden, from Linden take Rt. 638 to parking area #6, follow fire road or foot trail to right.

VNPS Registry Sites

HUNTLEY MEADOWS PARK
Potowmack Chapter
3701 Lockheed Blvd., Fairfax County, south of Alexandria between US 1 to the east and I-95 to the west

MANASSAS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK
Prince William Wildflower Society
Located off Rt. 29 west of Centreville are several registered areas including Deep Cut, Stone Bridge, the rock field behind Battery Heights and Brawner Farm. Stone Bridge, parking lot on Fairfax/Prince William County line. Deep Cut, turn onto Featherbed Lane (Rt. 622) off Rt. 29 west, proceed to parking. Deep Cut is on left. For Brawner Farm and Battery Heights directions, stop at the Battlefield Center to pick up a brochure with map. Several other areas are being considered for registry.

RIVERBEND PARK
Potowmack Chapter
Dranesville District of Northern Fairfax County, Georgetown Pike (Rt. 193) to River Bend Park Rd. to Jeffrey Rd.

RUNNYMEDE PARK
Potowmack Chapter
In the town of Herndon off Herndon Parkway

SCOTTS RUN PARK
Potowmack Chapter
Dranesville District of Northern Fairfax County, I-495 to Georgetown Pike (Rt. 193), on right before Potomac Overlook subdivision.

VNPS gifts make the holidays happy

If you would like to have us send a Holiday Card announcing your gift, please send the information and payment immediately! Use the membership application in your newsletter, or just send all of the information to our Blandy office with payment of $20 for an individual membership or $30 for a family membership and we will get the notice of your gift in the mail! Be sure to include <u>your</u> name.

Some other ideas for gifts:

There are a few t-shirts available from the VNPS office - all are long-sleeved, black with flowers on the front and the VNPS logo on the sleeve, $20 including s/h.

The VNPS ceramic mugs are also available for $15 each including s/h.

A stocking stuffer gift! A gift for your gardening friend! A special gift for your friend who is interested in conservation of natural habitats! A gift for your child's teacher or your instructor!

VNPS 2002 Annual Workshop under construction!

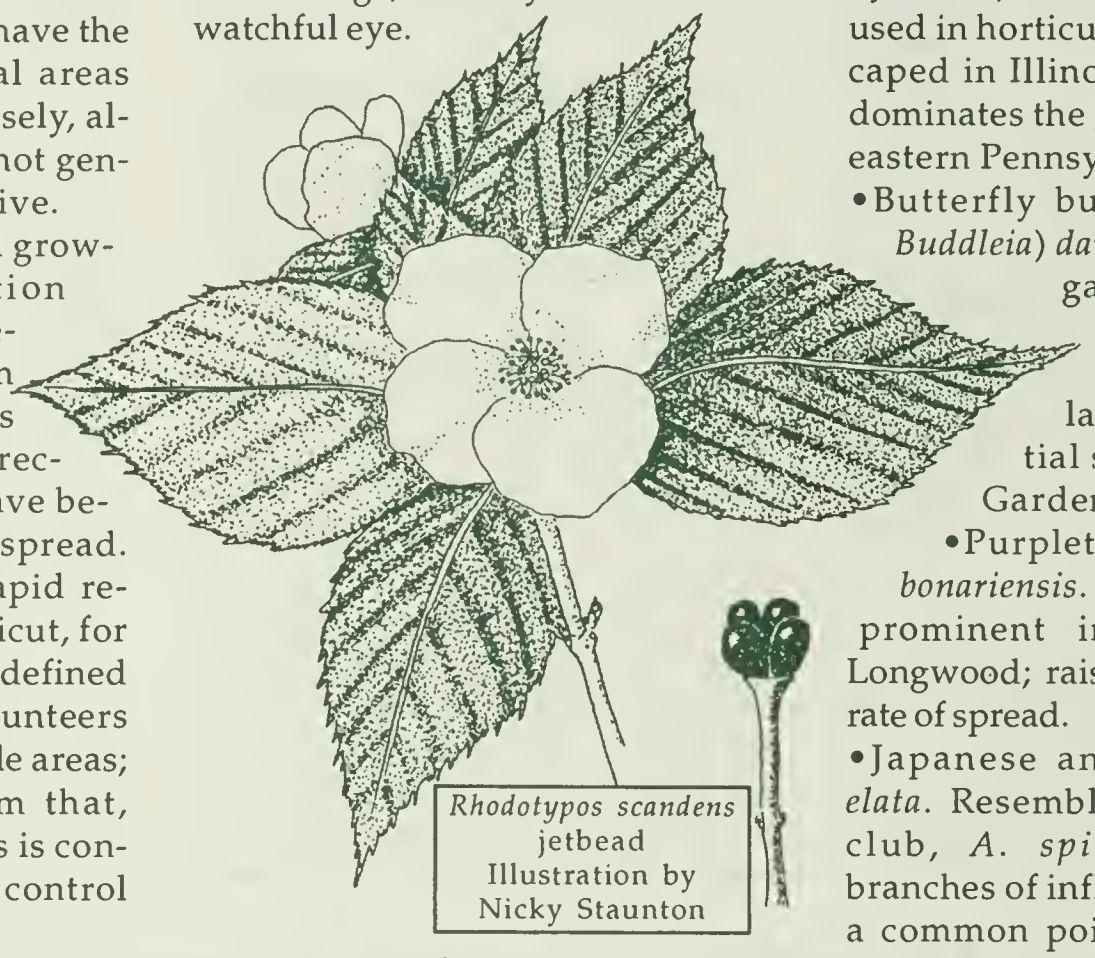
VNPS directors are meeting now to build a program for the spring annual workshop. Stan Shetler (Botany), Jessie Strother (Conservation), Deanne Eversmeyer (Horticulture) and Elizabeth Fischer (Education) will hammer out the special topic of interest (maybe Land Trusts will be part of the program) and locating special presenters. The date, location and other information will be sent to you early in 2002 so you will be able to put it on your spring calendar!

Native plant lovers should keep sharp eye on emerging invasives

"Emerging invasives" were in the spotlight at the Mid-Atlantic Invasive Plants Conference held at Swarthmore College in August. These are alien plants that knowledgeable observers believe have the potential to invade natural areas and should be watched closely, although at present they are not generally categorized as invasive.

This concern is part of a growing focus on early action against invasive aliens. Removing or controlling them is much easier and less costly when they are first recognized than when they have become entrenched and widespread. A new "early detection, rapid response" system in Connecticut, for example, includes carefully defined criteria of invasiveness; volunteers trained to monitor vulnerable areas; and a funding mechanism that, once a species' invasiveness is confirmed, makes money for control available without delay.

Here are a few emerging invasives reported in the mid-Atlantic area. Like many species widely recognized as invasive, most are used to some extent as ornamentals. None is now on the list of invasive alien species developed for Virginia by VNPS and the state Division of Natural Heritage, but they warrant a watchful eye.



Rhodotypos scandens
jetbead
Illustration by
Nicky Staunton

•Callery, Bradford, and other ornamental pears, *Pyrus calleryana*. Self-sterile but able to pollinate other cultivars. Spreading from street plantings in Pennsylvania and Maryland; volunteers also spotted along the Dulles Access Road in northern Virginia.

•Jetbead, *Rhodotypos scandens*. Long used in horticulture. Reported as escaped in Illinois in the 1930s; now dominates the ground layer in some eastern Pennsylvania natural areas.

•Butterfly bush, *Buddleja* (often *Buddleia*) *davidii*. Popular among gardeners to draw nectar-seeking butterflies (but provides no larval food). Substantial spread at Longwood Gardens a concern.

•Purpletop vervain, *Verbena bonariensis*. A showy perennial, prominent in the meadow at Longwood; raising questions due to rate of spread.

•Japanese angelica-tree, *Aralia elata*. Resembles native Hercules' club, *A. spinosa*, except that branches of inflorescence arise from a common point; may have ornamental appeal. Watched for more than two years in Pennsylvania, appears to be spreading.

Mary Pockman, VNPS Co-recording secretary

Plans roll along for Flora of Virginia Project

The Foundation of the Flora of Virginia Project has been incorporated and the initial board of directors selected and confirmed.

At a meeting in August, the following directors were approved:

•J. Christopher Ludwig, President (Va. DCR-Division of Natural Heritage Chief Biologist) Executive Director and co-author of the *Flora of Virginia*

•Chip Morgan, Vice President (Wintergreen Nature Foundation)

•Michael Garson, Secretary and Attorney for the project (Marino & Garson, Washington, D.C.)

•Rex Baird, Treasurer (Virginia Academy of Science/Professor Emeritus of Biology at U.Va.-Wise)

•Thomas Smith, Director (Director of Va. DCR-Division of Natural Heritage)

•Michael Lipford, Director (Vice President and Virginia Executive Director of The Nature Conservancy)

•Marion Lobstein, Director (Vice President of Virginia Academy of Science, Associate Professor NVCC and U.Va. Adjunct Professor at Blandy Experimental Farm)

•Donna Ware, Director (Virginia Flora Committee of the Virginia Academy of Science; Research Associate Professor at the College of William & Mary)

•Nicky Staunton, Director (President, Virginia Native Plant Society)

Also present at the meeting: Joslin Gallatin who will be in charge of fundraising, and Alan Wheatley who will co-author the *Flora of Virginia*.

Project assignments have been made and the initial organizational work is under way! A slide presentation about the Flora of Virginia is ready now. If you would like to have a presentation of the project made to your chapter, garden club, conservation group or other organization, let Nicky Staunton know and arrangements to bring the slide show and information to your group will be made. (nstaunton@earthlink.net or call 703-368-9803)

The publication date for the Flora is to be 2007 and the project budget is $2.25 million. Donation information will be distributed as soon as possible. Meanwhile, if you would like to donate, you may send your contribution to Dr. Rex Baird, Treasurer, Flora of Virginia Foundation, UVA/Wise, Wise, VA 24293.

Virginians have waited a long time to publish the state's botanical information that initially began to be gathered when the settlers arrived in Virginia! It is exciting to be a part of this monumental work.

VNPS takes action to protect plants on many levels

(Continued from page 1)

VPI-Horticulture, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Virginia Nurserymen's Association, The Nature Conservancy, American Society of Landscape Architects, Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Virginia Department of Forestry.

•Educational slide shows including, "Virginia's Native Plants From Mountain to Shore," "Good Plants Gone Bad: Invasive Alien Plants," and "VNPS Virginia Registry Sites" are available to organizations

•VNPS members are available to present programs on "Butterfly Gardening," "Landscaping with Native Plants" and many other subjects

•Chapters may obtain and distribute educational brochures produced by other VNPS chapters. These include: "Hedgerows, Do I Have to Mow All That?" (By the Piedmont Chapter), "Butterfly Gardens" and "Woodland Gardens" (by the Prince William Wildflower Society), and "Wildflower Hikes in the Shenandoah Chapter Area."

•The society website, www.vnps.org, is available and should be given to the people who are decision-makers about municipal landscaping. More information is available from other chapter newsletters posted on the webpage.

2. Develop the same dialogue with our Virginia Department of Transportation to stop the senseless mowing of thousands of acres of right of way along our interstate and rural highway systems.

•Dialogue at the state level with VDOT began very slowly. It does occur. VNPS has joined with Scenic Virginia and fellow organizations to request proper roadside mowing and proper use of herbicides. Correct tree pruning techniques by VDOT crews have been requested. Recently, VDOT redesigned its wildflower license plate by using native plants. To support the roadside planting of native plants, buy a native plant license plate (will be available when 350 orders have been received). VDOT is trying to increase the native plant sites in medians. VNPS will continue to urge native plant use in conversations with VDOT. Recently, VDOT's Ken Oristaglio released a brochure/poster, "Wildflowers Color Virginia." VNPS and the Federation of Virginia Garden Clubs were consulted on the project. Eight native plants were included in the thirteen species highlighted.

•Chapters are encouraged to get to know their VDOT Residency Manager in order to develop a working relationship. Many decisions are made at that level regarding roadside maintenance.

3. I would like to see the Native Plant Society held in such esteem that our opinion is requested in public or statewide planting schemes.

•While VNPS has sometimes been invited to share information, it is not used as often as possible. Our board of directors has authoritative members who are leaders in their fields: Stan Shetler, Smithsonian Botanist Emeritus and Cole Burrell, lecturer, writer and designer using native plants, are just two. Many members are professional horticulturists, botanists, landscape designers, nursery owners, botanical educators, ecologists, foresters and natural resource managers with years of experience.

•VDOT has been very agreeable to our requests to perform rescue of native plants along highway construction sites prior to construction.

•Since VDOT and other state agencies are required to use the *Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook* (3rd edition, 1992) when they must stabilize sites, they are limited to use of plants in the manual. Some are invasive alien plants. They cannot accept our suggestions until this manual is updated.

4. VNPS should strive to lend our name as an organization to the list of environmental stewards such as the Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy when we know there is an environmental threat in our state.

•VNPS cooperates in any way possible when requested by these and other organizations with threats to habitats and species of plants and their communities. When we need help, we request it from them and other environmental groups. Sometimes our support is through communication to chapters and members to involve their efforts and other times through letters and phone calls made on behalf of our entire membership of nearly 2,000. Chapter members are encouraged to join these and other responsible conservation organizations in Virginia that work for the same goals as VNPS.

•Since 1982, VNPS has been an affiliate member of the Virginia Conservation Network (formerly the Conservation Council of Virginia). Alerts reach VNPS and our action follows. The information goes to the presidents of chapters for them to pass on to their members for action if they choose. VNPS has had a display exhibit at the annual Virginia Environmental Assembly attended by Conservation Chair Jessie Strother.

•VNPS was a charter co-operator of the national Plant Conservation Alliance.

•VNPS has joined with regional organizations and federal agencies in the Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council. Mary Pockman is our representative and another board member, Faith Campbell, is an MA-EPPC organizer and officer.

•VNPS also has joined the Southeast-Exotic Pest Plant Council and Dr. Ruth Douglas represents VNPS at the meetings. As with the MA-EPPC, we have no presence on the board of officers, but attend meetings to exchange information. Since Virginia's southern state line is so large, some invasive plants can occur there that would not reach as far north as Northern Virginia.

•Ted Scott continues to address

(See Letter, page 10)

Gentianopsis procera fringed gentian

September offers different treat at Canada's Bruce

Two friends, Ron and Carol Nelson, and I began plans for an autumn trip to the Bruce Peninsula in the summer of 2000 and despite the terrorist disasters in New York and Arlington, we departed this September 14 for Canada. Travel was easy and crossing into Canada uncomplicated.

The first stop on the peninsula was at Oliphant Fen and my spirit was lifted. The area was a mass of *Parnassia glauca*, grass of Parnassus, white blossoms, and fen cress with yellow blossoms (I didn't know to look at the roots under the water to identify it!) and, best of all, *Gentianopsis procera*, smaller fringed gentian, just a little smaller than *G. crinata*, the same deep gentian blue. The bright red fruit of *Tofieldia racemosa*, false asphodel, was nodding nearby. All these plants were seen near Wildwood Lodge, along with *Spiranthes romanzoffiana*, hooded ladies' tresses. Nearby, several late Indian paintbrush plants were blooming!

We visited several open gardens following a two-day trip to Royal Botanical Garden in Hamilton, Ontario. The visit was another adventure, complete with two lighthouse site visits (one on an Indian reservation) and a field of buffalo! We returned home with these memories to see us through all of the current anxious news of the day.

Nicky Staunton, VNPS President

Sign up for June 2002 trip

Once again the Bruce beckons

Has the Bruce been beckoning you as you have been reading about the VNPS botanical trips to Canada's Bruce Peninsula in the *Bulletin* over the past ten years? VNPS members have an opportunity to visit the extraordinary flora of Canada's Bruce Peninsula in June 2002. Maybe you have been there and would like to return.

Depending on the blooming season, we would expect to see the rare *Hymenoxys herbacea*, lake daisy, or *Gymnocarpium robertianum*, Robert's oak fern, in the alvar protected plant community; *Phylitis scolopendrium*, Hart's tongue fern; *Cypripedium reginae*, showy ladyslipper, by the roadside; bog and fen plants and the fantastic flora of Flower Pot Island in the Georgian Bay. Our plant list contains over 400 plant species. Every visit we add to the list because we have new people with fresh observations.

Stanwyn Shetler, Botanist Emeritus of the Smithsonian and VNPS Botany Director, and Elaine Shetler, along with Nicky Staunton,VNPS President and leader of VNPS trips to the Bruce, are teaming to visit again. Stan has been to the Bruce several times and this will be Nicky's eighth trip. Every year the blooming cycle differs and offers new combinations of flora and often species new to our floral list.

If you are interested in being part of the VNPS group in 2002, there will be room for 16 and we need to know of your firm intention to go by January 15. The trip needs a minimum of 14 participants. A $100 deposit will reserve your space and will apply to the total fee. If the trip does not form, the deposit will be refunded.

The cost for a full week of lodging and meals, and one roundtrip boat ride to Flower Pot Island will be $550 per person. Payments may be made in one payment or a schedule for two payments can be set up when you make your reservation.

The information you will want to know is that we have reservations for Saturday, June 15 through Saturday, June 22. Our home for the week will be Wildwood Lodge, Mar, Ontario, Canada, reached by crossing into Canada from Niagara, N.Y. Maps will be furnished. Wildwood Lodge is on the beach of Lake Huron with fantastic sunsets (hence, "Red Bay.") The Bruce Peninsula is between Lake Huron and the Georgian Bay on the Niagara Escarpment and is recognized as a UNESCO Biosphere because of its unique geology and flora. Members will furnish their own transportation to and from Canada. Most of us break the trip into 1 1/2 days, stopping the first evening near Buffalo. On the Bruce, we car pool as much as possible. Some time will be scheduled for you to explore, shop or rest up. Otherwise, we are out all day, every day, leaving after breakfast, taking a bag lunch and getting back by 5 p.m. for supper at 6 p.m. The walks are not strenuous, a list of more challenging walks will be available.

No problem crossing into Canada is expected.

Reservations will be taken until January 15, the date we must confirm or cancel the trip with Victor Thomas owner of Wildwood Lodge. To reserve space, please call, e-mail or write to Nicky Staunton: (703-368-9803, nstaunton@earthlink.net or 8815 Fort Drive, Manassas, Va. 20110).

Order your copy of "Wildflowers Color Virginia"

The Virginia Department of Transportation's colorful brochure/poster, "Wildflowers Color Virginia, " is available from Ken Oristaglio by e-mail at koris@vdot.state.va.us or by calling 1-800-774-3382 or 804-371-6825 or writing VDOT, Office of Community and Public Relations, 1401 E. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219.

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Growing and going on...*by Mary M. Painter*

I write here in tribute to a remarkable colleague and to notify our members of a unique opportunity. That is to say a unique chance for someone with a dream and passion to pick up the torch of a prominent native plant nursery. While putting together the VNPS and setting up my own nursery in Fauquier County, Kim Hawks was distinguishing herself within North Carolina's retail nursery industry. (Each of our nurseries was established in 1986.) We met and have since perennially reconvened at the incomparable gathering known as Cullowhee. By popular demand, Kim has often served on the conference's program as a field trip leader. Her nursery has consistently provided scholarship support so that the event may keep others' flames high.

Kim Hawks deeply shares in the belief that wild spaces are essential to our well-being. Trim and suntanned, with wings in her shoes, she has explored many of the world's most precious natural areas. She has played, in her own words, "in the healing and restorative effects of nature." Her Niche Gardens started out "as a garden of dreams, shaggy and full and nontraditional in its plantings." The garden has since expanded as a real showplace. Visitors may view a series of garden spaces keying in on various habitats and group plantings -- from waterside and bog habitats -- to the Grants Meadows Garden. There is a children's garden and winding paths through whimsical garden art to shady groves. Many greenhouses harbor what we should only accept: nursery-propagated sales stock.

Niche Gardens has specialized in plants native to the southeastern U.S. and has served as a gateway for many other adaptable, non-invasive species which Kim encountered in her globetrotting and networking within our industry. Countless introductions/natural selections passed through the Niche corridors to cultivated gardens throughout the country. In any setting, Kim's expertise and high energy keep us charged and "plugged-into" signs of life on this planet. Lower back trouble has compromised her desire to carry on in the physical demands of a nursery operation. No doubt she will go on to light up the world in other ways.

***Niche Gardens:** A specialty retail, mail order nursery, successfully established in sales, design services and development of superb display gardens; 7.2 acres, including an approved house site; located in Chapel Hill, N.C., in the Research Triangle-Raleigh-Durham area. Featuring southeastern native wildflowers, choice trees, shrubs and ornamental grasses. Expert staff and owner in place to keep operations running smoothly during sale and transition. Request business prospectus via e-mail to: Kimhawks@ipass.net. Phone: 919-942-5542.*

•Preserves

(Continued from page 3)

tax. And if a full or partial gift of land or gift of an easement on land is made to a conservation organization, one-half of the value of the gift may be taken as a tax credit to offset state income tax due to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In the 12-year history of Virginia's Natural Area Preserve System the program has had access to almost $13 million in state funds, more than $6 million in federal grants and about $2 million in gifts of land and cash contributions from individuals and partners such as The Nature Conservancy. One of the biggest challenges facing land conservation of all types in Virginia today is funding. The availability of sufficient funding and having a reliable source of funds to allow long-range planning is critical in Virginia. Let's hope a solution to this is found in the Virginia General Assembly next year. If you would like to learn more about the Natural Area Preserve System or the Virginia Natural Heritage Program, visit the website at: www.dcr.state.va.us/dnh//.

Article by Larry Smith, Manager-Natural Preserve System, Division of Natural Heritage, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

See the address label for your membership expiration date

VNPS Membership/Renewal Form

Name(s)_____
Address_____
City_____State_____Zip_____

___Individual $20
___Family $30 ___Student $15
___Patron $50 ___Associate (groups) $40*
___Sustaining $100 ___Life $500

*Please designate one person as delegate for Associate membership

To give a gift membership or join additional chapters: Enclose dues, name, address, and chapter (non-voting memberships in any other than your primary chapter are $5)

I wish to make an additional contribution to ___VNPS or_____Chapter in the amount of ___$10___$25___$50___$100___$(Other)_____

_____Check if you do not wish your name to be listed to be exchanged with similar organizations in a chapter directory

Make check payable to VNPS and mail to:

VNPS Membership Chair, Blandy Experimental Farm, 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2, Boyce, VA 22620

Membership dues are tax deductible in the amount they exceed $5. Contributions are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

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The deadline for the next issue is **December 1**

•Letter

(Continued from page 7)

conservation issues in Virginia, working with Ruth and Mary.

•On the VNPS Virginia Native Plant Registry Site committee, there are representatives from The Nature Conservancy, DCR-Division of Natural Heritage, academic botanists and two VNPS members who are strong land conservationists, Jocelyn Sladen and Bo Dale. Chapters each have a registrar who is urged to locate, document and submit unique native plant sites to the committee. In a ranking of registry, The Nature Conservancy will purchase land to preserve it; DCR-Division of Natural Heritage has a stewardship program that purchases land to protect it; VNPS will register land that might not fit the standards of the previous two groups. We offer no legal protection by registry; rather, we encourage protection by the owner who recognizes its value.

In conclusion, I would like to see some real leadership in civic-minded conservation activities. These are desperate times for local and state native places; once lost, these areas may be gone forever. We need to...accomplish something real and lasting...God help us all, and all of our descendants, if we let business and development concerns run roughshod over the natural environment without anyone to stop them.

Thank you for giving me a forum to voice my concerns.

VNPS loses a valued friend

Our VNPS friends on the staff of Blandy Experimental Farm have suffered the tragic loss of Susan Farmer. Susan was the wife of Tim Farmer, director of public relations for Blandy. A deer collided with Susan's car early one morning recently and Susan, only 36, survived just a couple of days. We express our deep sadness to Tim and also, to the staff at Blandy. Tim has been a faithful friend to VNPS and has helped Karen York, our office manager and VNPS too often to count. I met Susan about a year ago and was immediately impressed with her brightness in the group of friends.

Nicky Staunton, VNPS President

Listen to Watershed Radio for Chesapeake Bay facts

Watershed Radio, created by the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center and the Sierra Club, is an environmental education project about the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The project uses daily one-minute radio spots and a website at http://www.watershedradio.org to feature a wide variety of aspects of the watershed including people, places, history, science, natural environment, animals and plants, and watershed organizations.

The radio spots are broadcast at stations throughout the watershed, and the website provides the text and audio file of these radio spots together with additional information about the topic and links to other resources on the Internet. The website already contains over 120 pages of information on the Chesapeake Bay watershed and is growing every day.

Free pruning seminar

A free pruning seminar will be held Saturday, Dec. 8, 9 a.m. until noon at Linton Hall School, 9535 Linton Hall Road, Bristow. Learn principles behind correct pruning. A classroom portion is inside but hands-on pruning is outside, so dress appropriately and bring hand-held, by-pass pruners and a small saw. For information or to register, call the Prince William County Extension Office at 703-792-6285.

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